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S E R M O N S

T O

Y O U N G M E N.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

B Y

JONATHAN MAYHEW, D.D.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

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L O N D O N,

PRINTED FOR T. BECKET AND  
P. A. DE HONDT, IN THE STRAND;  
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MDCCLXVII.

29



DEDICATION



IN composing the following Sermons, I must own, I had no other sermons in view as a model. They were written entirely from the scriptures, and from my own heart; of the latter of which at least they are a true, though imperfect representation. I fear of all had I in view as a model, either the sermons of any digressed devotees to particular systems of religion, distinct from the general and glorious one of the gospel; or such cold, uninteresting discourses as hit the frivolous taste of those who value sermons only for an imaginary delicacy of sentiment and expression, with-

## DEDICATION.

My dear young Brethren,

**I**N composing the following Sermons, I must own, I had no other sermons in view as a model. They were written intirely from the scriptures, and from my own heart; of the latter of which at least, they are a true, though imperfect representation. Least of all had I in view as a model, either the sermons of any bigotted devotees to particular systems of religion, distinct from the general and glorious one of the gospel; or such cold, uninteresting discourses as hit the frivolous taste of those, who value sermons only for an imaginary delicacy of sentiment and expression, with-

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out solidity, without force or energy; without entering into the spirit and importance of religion. I do not think mine the worse, for not being imitations of such as either of these. The former are my aversion, as the illiberal productions of SLAVES, who desire to TYRANNIZE over other mens consciences; the latter my contempt, as the superficial, insipid, empty harangues of VAIN MEN; which do not deserve the name of sermons. If discourses from the pulpit are adapted only to please the ear and the fancy, like many of the modern fashionable ones; instead of having a direct tendency to alarm the conscience of a sinner, to warm the heart of a saint, or to enlighten the understandings of any; they serve, in my opinion, to no better purposes, than those of UNSEASONABLY amusing the hearers, disgracing the places in which, and the persons by whom they are delivered, as frivolous, conceited declaimers; who seek only the applause of men, by their sounding brags and tinkling cymbals, in-

## DEDICATION.

stead of designing to do good, by manifestation of the truth, and commending themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of GOD. I must own, I should be a little mortified, as well as greatly disappointed, if any persons who are charmed with such lullabies and opiates to the conscience from the pulpit, should think the following discourses in any measure TOLERABLE.

The subject is handled in such a manner as to give you a general, comprehensive idea of true religion, with its advantages and importance: I mean, of CHRISTIANITY, according to my own conceptions of it. The scheme or plan of the sermons is very extensive: it opens a wide field, almost boundless on every side, and presenting numberless objects to the view. Whoever looks over the contents of them, will see that they are not deficient in point of variety, whatever other faults they may be justly charged with. But, in this way



## IN EDUCATION.

of treating the subject, it was impossible to handle any particular doctrine or precept of the gospel fully, or with accuracy and precision. Had I pretended to handle the various branches of religion here touched upon, in this manner, each sermon would have swelled to a folio; and they must have employed more years than I was days, in composing and preaching them.

The general design of them, viz. to instruct the YOUNG, and, by the blessing of GOD, to form their minds to the love and practice of true religion, cannot but be approved by all wise and good men; how much soever I have failed in the method, or execution. The instruction of the YOUNG, in order to their being well principled, and acting a proper part in life, is a thing of the utmost importance to themselves and to society. This has, accordingly, been a favourite, a principal object with some of the wisest men, in their

## D E D I C A T I O N. m

respective ages and countries. Three  
 such persons in particular, at once pre-  
 sent themselves to my mind; **SOLOMON**,  
**SOCRATES** and **CICERO**.  
 The first of these, **SOLOMON**, among  
 the **JEWS**, had a very particular attention  
 to the **YOUNG**, in his invaluable writings;  
 a treasure more to be prized than millions  
 of gold and silver. He himself informs us,  
 and it is obvious from the most cursory  
 view of them, that their more immediate  
 and special design was, "to give to the  
**YOUNG MAN** knowledge and under-  
 standing."  
 The second, **SOCRATES**, so renowned  
 among the **GREEKS** for his wisdom and  
 virtue, is also known to have devoted his  
 time and great talents, chiefly to the in-  
 struction of **YOUNG MEN**. Though he  
 left nothing in writing, which is com-  
 mon to us, yet authentic history gives  
 us this account of him; and the dialogues

# viii DEDICATION

of PLATO, his learned disciple, in which the sentiments and discourses of SOCRATES are represented, clearly evince the same thing. He was, however, in that superstitious, corrupt, and idolatrous, though polite age, accused, tried and condemned as a perverter of the YOUTH of ATHENS; more particularly, as it is said, because he taught them the UNITY of GOD; ridiculing polytheism, with the numberless superstitions and follies which time, ignorance and prejudice had consecrated, as the sacred mysteries of religion; i. e. in other words, he was considered as an impious HERETIC and BLASPHEMER. This it was, that enraged the priests, the politicians, and even the poets of ATHENS, against that extraordinary person; and finally brought him, as a martyr for the truth, to drink the fatal HEMLOCK in a jail, a poor requital for such important services to his country. But thus it is, that "the world gives to — thus, that it often rewards its benefactor

## DEDICATION. xi

tors, of whom it is not worthy. And even the SON of GOD himself, was by wicked hands crucified and slain as a BLASPHEMER, for asserting that the only true GOD was his FATHER; thereby making himself, as the priests maliciously accused him, equal with GOD!

Y CICERO among the ROMANS, the third of these renowned men, the wisest and best of his time and nation, had a special view to the benefit of YOUNG MEN, in divers of his admirable writings; particularly in that very valuable book his OFFICES, inscribed to his son MARCUS. He also took great pains in some of his other writings, to expose the folly, superstition and knavery of the priests and augurs, and other supposed holy men of those times; and to preserve both the old and young from the sad effects of their desolation and hypocrisy, though he was himself one of their ORDER. He was, accordingly, accounted an HERETIC by them.



## DEDICATION.

And though he did not fall at last as a martyr directly for true religion; yet he fell as one of the most glorious advocates for LIBERTY, that the world ever saw: an honour next to that of suffering martyrdom for religion; and, in some sort, the same thing; true religion comprising in it the love of liberty, and of one's country; and the hatred of all tyranny and oppression.

It is evident, moreover, from the epistles of the great apostle PAUL, and of JOHN the beloved disciple of our Lord, that both of them had a particular attention to the YOUNG, in their writings: not to mention the many excellent divines, or other learned and good men, who, in later ages, have devoted a great part of their time, and their noble talents, to the service of GOD and their generation, in this way. To say the least, therefore, I have no occasion to blush, for having employed my meaner talents

## DEDICATION. xi

with a particular view to the benefit of my YOUNG brethren, when I consider these illustrious examples: especially, when I also reflect on what passed betwixt our LORD and PETER, when the former, the chief shepherd, was just ascending to his FATHER and our FATHER, to his GOD and our GOD, "JESUS saith to Simon Peter, Simon son of Jonas, "lovest thou me more than these? He "saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou "knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, FEED MY LAMBS."

While others, who are rich in wisdom, cast in of their abundance into the treasury and offerings of GOD, for the immediate service of the YOUNG, the LAMBS of CHRIST's fold; I may be permitted, like the poor widow, of my penury to cast in a mite or two. In which respect, I may also accommodate to myself, and adopt the words of the last-mentioned apostle, PETER, originally

spoken with another view, on a particular occasion: **SILVER** and **GOLD** have I none; but such as I have give I you. If what I here offer, as my own, is neither gold, silver nor precious stones; yet, I trust, it is not wholly dross, wood, hay or stubble. Mean as it is, I hope, my beloved young brethren, that you will not despise it, nor do I doubt, but that the infinitely good and merciful **GOD** will graciously accept it through **Jesus Christ**, as sincerely intended for his glory.

It is said by some, that these times are very corrupt and degenerate, in comparison of those of our fore-fathers; and particularly, that the **YOUTH** of these days are remarkably light and vain, loose and profligate, both in principle and manners. There is doubtless always, and great occasion in this present evil world, for reformation; but I am not certain, however, that the above-mentioned

charge is strictly just: possibly they who bring it, may not "enquire wisely concerning the former times," nor the present, when they think that those were so much "better than these." Be that as it may, yet, I am persuaded, the most likely way to produce a reformation, is not to rail at the times, or to make such invidious comparisons betwixt the age present, and those which are past. I have, therefore, wholly declined this kind of RHETORIC and DECLAMATION in these discourses: contenting myself with plainly telling you the truth and your duty; and urging it upon you by such considerations, as are at all times proper. But if there is any real foundation for such a charge against the YOUTH of the present age, these discourses will be so much the more REASONABLE, and claim your attention accordingly.

I have addressed you in them, and endeavoured to treat you, as reasonable crea-



## XIV DEDICATION.

tures. You will not, it is hoped, think it less incumbent upon you to shew yourselves men by your conduct, though but young, than it was upon me to treat you as such. To the many arguments and motives to that end, used in these discourses, let me here subjoin, that as some of you may, and have been blest with a LIBERAL and LEARNED, as well as religious education; the more is expected of you both by GOD and man, on this account. Take heed, my brethren, that you do not any of you disgrace your education, by a conduct unworthy both of that and yourselves;—either by a vicious and profligate, or even by a low, fordid, and vulgar behaviour. In either of which cases, especially the former, you may be assured, that what would otherwise be for your honour, will, in the end, turn to your shame and reproach. I say this, you know, as your friend, not as your enemy.

# DEDICATION XX

Let me just add, that if any of you, after hearing, or reading these sermons on christian sobriety, should conduct yourselves unsoberly, unrighteously and ungodly in the world, instead of living as the grace of GOD which has appeared, teaches you to live; these very sermons will be as swift witnesses against you. But GOD forbid, that this my friendly design, and which is sincerely intended for good concerning you, should eventually be a means of aggravating your guilt, and inflaming your condemnation! As my beloved brethren I warn you; at the same time hoping "better things of you, and things that accompany salvation," being

Your sincere Friend and Brother,  
JONATHAN MATHEW.

NOTATION

1894

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S E R M O N S

TO

Y O U N G M E N

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THE POULTRY

MDCCLXXII.

# S E R M O N S

TO

## Y O U N G M E N.

### S E R M O N I.

#### TITUS ii. 6.

*Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded,*

**T**ITUS, to whom the apostle Paul wrote this short, but excellent epistle, is generally supposed to have been converted to the christian faith by his ministry: and it is doubtless with reference hereto, that the apostle calls him "his own son, after the common faith\*."

Titus being a young man of great hopes, when he first became a disciple of Christ, St. Paul seems to have had a particular

\* Chap. i. 4.

kindness and regard for him; sometimes taking him with him as his companion and assistant in the kingdom and patience of Christ, while he travelled from country to country, to preach his unsearchable riches among the Gentiles. It appears from divers passages in the New Testament, that Titus was a person of no small consideration among the Christians of that day, even before he came to reside at Crete; being deputed, sometimes by one apostle or another, and sometimes by an whole church, to transact affairs of great importance to the common cause of Christianity, which trusts he seems to have discharged with great ability and reputation. And whether Titus went with St. Paul to Crete, is one of his journeyes, as seems most probable, and whether it was by his, or the apostle's government, or by that of some other person, that the gospel was first planted in that island, is

not material at present to be enquired, or determined. It is still evident that they were, on some occasion or other, both together at this populous island; famous long before that time, as the supposed place of Jupiter's birth; for Minos its just king; for its labyrinth, its hundred cities, &c. It is now more commonly known by the name of Candy, from its chief city, founded by the Saracens; and at this day subject to the Turks. It is, moreover, certain that, at the time when St. Paul and Titus were together at Crete, there was a considerable number of christian converts there; who were, 'tis likely, part Jews by birth, and part Gentiles. It is still farther certain, that the apostle being about to depart from thence, left this excellent persons, who had by this time acquired great knowledge and experience, in Crete, to superintend the affairs of the church; to regulate things there, and particularly to ordain elders, for pastors, in all the cities wherein it should be need-



ful. "For this cause left I thee in Crete," says he, "that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee &c." From whence it appears that the church, or churches of Crete, were not hitherto reduced to due form, rule, or order; most, if not all the cities being destitute of regular, fixed pastors, or overseers.

St. Paul wrote this epistle to Titus very soon after he left him at Crete. As is commonly supposed, it was written by him from Macedonia, about the year of our Lord 65 or 66. He thought proper, it seems, at once to shew his regard for Titus, and his care for the yet-unformed, unregulated churches of Crete, to send him this letter: containing more particular counsels and directions, probably, than he had given him verbally before; that, by having these in his hands in writing,

to read, and to communicate to others, they might be the more strictly observed both by him and the churches there, as they were respectively concerned herein. And having reminded Titus, as was before observed, of the general design with which he left him at Crete, he immediately proceeds to give him directions respecting the qualifications which he was to regard in the elders or pastors, to be ordained by him. "If any be blameless," &c. From whence some have imagined that Titus himself was constituted by the apostle, a bishop, and the first, of Crete, in that sense of the word, in which a bishop is now distinguished from a pastor, elder, or presbyter. Others, who suppose that in the New Testament, there is no such distinction of order or office, made betwixt them, which is an undeniable and manifest truth, yet suppose that Titus was actually ordained and fixed by the apostle in that office, by what-

ever name it be called. The first of these opinions is certainly an ill-grounded one; and the latter, most probably, a mistake also. For Titus was, in all probability, a bishop of Crete, neither in one nor the other of these senses; but was what, in scripture, is called an "evangelist," an officer quite distinct from a presbyter, pastor or bishop, which were then the same.

Do you ask then, What is meant by an evangelist? I will answer in the words of a divine, very learned in matters relative to the apostolic times, churches and customs. The evangelists were a sort of secondary apostles, who received their doctrine and authority immediately from the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: they were not fixed bishops, or pastors, of particular churches, but watered the churches which the apostles had planted, perfected what they had left deficient, planted churches by

## S E R M O N

“their orders, or rectified abuses; carried and brought back letters and messages” [of importance,] “and did all they could to supply the place of an apostle, when he was necessarily engaged elsewhere \*.” The account which we have of Titus in the New Testament, corresponds extremely well with this description of an evangelist; and he was, in all probability, an officer of that superior rank, betwixt an apostle and a bishop, or presbyter. And as the apostolic office, in the highest and properest sense of it, was discontinued when the apostles personally died; so, according to the description of an evangelist before given, the latter office must have also been discontinued with the other; i. e. in such sort, that no evangelist, in the highest and strictest sense, could be appointed, when there was no apostle surviving to appoint him. But, this notwithstanding,

\* Dr. George Benson.



there is no reason to doubt but that the bishops, pastors, or presbyters, who survived the apostles, had sufficient authority, not only to preach themselves, but to ordain others, for the defence and propagation of the gospel. And the ministers of the gospel at this day, by whatever name or title they are called, have still both these powers united in them; unless, perhaps, some of them have renounced one of them, by putting themselves into a state of servile dependence upon, and subjection to, those who have no right to lord it over God's heritage; or them. Be that as it may, the church of Christ, which is his body, never was, nor will be, so forsaken of its head, as not to have within itself, as derived from him, sufficient power, sufficient authority, for appointing all officers necessary for its support; and also for making increase of the body, by that which every joint



oversee them therein. For in the second chapter of the epistle, the apostle proceeds to give him some directions concerning the discharge of that duty; and the regard which he was therein to have to persons of different ages, sexes, and stations in life; admonishing him to adapt his instructions to them respectively. Alluding to the deceivers, and vain talkers, spoken of in the former chapter, he begins the second thus: "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." And, what things those are, we will, if you please, leave the apostle to explain for himself; as he does in the following verses. He immediately subjoins; "That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience." These then, are some of the things which become sound doctrine. What are the others? "The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness;

“not false accusers\*, not given to much wine, teachers of good things.”—Of what good things?—“That they may teach the young women to be sober,” as the apostle goes on; “to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.” But how were the elder women to teach the younger such good things as these? Doubtless, by their own exemplary practice, and private counsels, as opportunity presented: for the apostle allowed not women, except inspired, to teach in any other, or more public manner†. Thus it is then, that the elder women were to teach the younger these excellent things, amongst which are good economy, and a prudent, discreet and virtuous behaviour in their families; as for other reasons, in particular, lest “the

\* In the original, “not devils.”

† See 1 Cor. xiv. 34, and 1 Tim. ii. 12, 13.



word of God should be blasphemed; nor  
 the gospel of Christ should fall  
 under the contempt and reproach of men;  
 by reason of the ill conduct of women pro-  
 fessing godliness, whether old or young.

The apostle goes on; "Young men  
 likewise exhort to be sober-minded."  
 And he immediately subjoins [ver. 7.]  
 "In all things shewing thyself a pattern  
 of good works;" &c. Intimating to  
 Titus the great importance, the absolute  
 necessity, of taking heed to himself, as  
 well as to his doctrine; and of being an  
 example of that sobriety, that godly and  
 virtuous conversation, which, by his  
 preaching, he was to recommend to others.  
 The apostle then considers the state and  
 duty of servants, enjoining Titus to teach  
 them "to be obedient unto their own mas-  
 ters, and to please them well, &c. that  
 they might adorn the doctrine of God  
 our Saviour in all things." And these  
 duties of the old and young, male and fe-

made, bond and free, the apostle suggests to Titus, should be enforced upon them respectively, by motives drawn from the nature and design of the gospel of God's grace. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation unto all men," [so it might, and, I think, ought to be rendered] "hath appeared; teaching us, that denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the appearing of the glory of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee." Thus ends the chapter.

And from this cursory view of the chapter, we may form a good general idea of

what the apostle intended in the beginning of it, by "sound doctrine," and the "things which become it." viz. more especially the plain, obvious, and indisputable doctrines of the gospel, respecting the redemption of mankind by the Son of God, and his appearing in glory hereafter to judge the world; together with the practice of sobriety, righteousness and godliness; those duties, the excellency and obligation of which, are in some measure apparent from the light of nature, though more clearly made manifest, and more forcibly taught, in the gospel of the grace of God; in the faith of which they are to be performed. And this account of the things which become sound doctrine, may receive both illustration and confirmation from the same apostle's first epistle to Timothy, written on a similar occasion with this to Titus—"The law is not made for a righteous man," says he, "but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and

# SERMON I

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“for sinners, for the unholy and pro-  
 “phane, for murderers of fathers, and  
 “murderers of mothers, for manslayers,  
 “for whoremongers, for them that de-  
 “file themselves with mankind, for men-  
 “stealers, for liars, for perjured persons,  
 “and if there be ANY OTHER THING  
 “THAT IS CONTRARY TO SOUND  
 “DOCTRINE, according to the glori-  
 “ous gospel,” &c.

Here then, you have the apostle's idea,  
 both of the things which become, and  
 which are contrary to, sound doctrine.  
 But, alas! how different a conception  
 have many persons, concerning the go-  
 spel, its great design, and the things which  
 become sound doctrine? Are there not  
 multitudes in the countries subjected to  
 the papal tyranny, who think that the  
 things which more especially become such  
 doctrine, are, telling beads, going on  
 pilgrimages, crossing themselves, kissing  
 “Tim. 1. 9, 10, 11.”



and worshipping images; and other such-like foolish and abominable practices, many of which are directly contrary to sound doctrine? And among the protestants, the reformed, are there not many, in whose yet depraved, and unreformed opinion, some of the appendages, and the circumstantialia of religion at best, have usurped the highest place and estimation, as the things that more particularly become sound doctrine; while the infinitely more important and indispensable duties of morality are despised, perhaps, as “weak and beggarly elements?” Are there not many protestants, in whose yet unreformed and depraved judgment, hardly any thing merits the honourable appellation of sound doctrine, besides the subtleties and refinements of speculative men, respecting certain abstruse, and, at best, very doubtful points?—Such as, one may safely say, very few people can even understand, and fewer still were, probably, ever the better for; though it

it is likely very many have been the worse: if not the worse, merely by believing them, yet by getting their minds soured about them, and embittered against their Christian brethren, who were so unhappy, or, perhaps more properly, so happy, as not to see with THEIR eyes. For my own part, I cannot but think it much more safe to form my conceptions of sound doctrine, and the things which become it, by this apostolical account thereof, than by the writings of any uninspired, self-conceited and arrogant men whatsoever: especially men, who were hardly ever easy, but when they were either coining some new, unscriptural definitions and distinctions, in the ungolden mint of their own brain, or imperiously imposing this drossy, counterfeit coin upon their neighbours; hereticating and persecuting, cursing and murdering all, who would not receive it as true and genuine, unless when SOMETHING ELSE proved a more efficacious restraint with them,

than either the fear of God, or the love of man: endeavouring to engage heaven and earth, and, with more success, probably, to move hell in their quarrel\*: asserting that their spiritual coin, for which, good men! they desired only worldly honours, and perishing gold in exchange, was the true riches, and evidently bore an heavenly, divine impression: while those to whom they would put it off, purely for their eternal benefit, could, alas poor blinded men! discern upon it no image or superscription more sacred and venerable, than the mere terrestrial one of the mortal coiners; the image of the earthly, not of the heavenly ADAM.

O detestable hypocrisy and villainy!—Such in fact were both the spirit and the practice of many of those men, who are now followed by multitudes of protestants, as the greatest luminaries of the Christian church since the apostles days,

\* *Flectere si nequeo Superos, Acheronta movebo.*  
*But vii.*

and the preachers of "sound doctrine," by way of distinction from others, at least as learned, and of a far more peaceable, pious and virtuous conversation; which is, indeed, paying these reputed **UN-SOUND** men, but a very indifferent compliment.

But, to return to the apostle and his epistle, from those who were so unlike him both in doctrine and manners.—His epistle having been written with a view to direct Titus in his behaviour as a minister of the gospel; and particularly, though not primarily, respecting that material branch of his duty as such, his doctrine, or preaching; the particular directions relative hereto, are doubtless obligatory upon the preachers of the gospel in succeeding ages; as is, at least generally, allowed. And, by the way, however superior Titus may be supposed to have been in some respects, to any or all the ministers of the gospel at this day; yet



the directions given him by the apostle, are given with such an air, in such a manner, as supposes him to have been only on a level with them in another, viz. as an uninspired man, who was to receive the doctrine which he preached, and the rules to be observed by him, immediately from the apostle, not from the Spirit of God, who spake in and by him. I think myself, therefore (one of the least considerable, indeed, of those who have the honour to sustain this sacred office) obliged to preach sound doctrine, and the things which become it, according to this account and representation thereof, in all its branches: but shall now confine myself to that single point, to which my text relates; the "exhorting young men  
" to be sober-minded." 1 bnd 1st

It has been the remark of many persons, and I suppose, not wholly without foundation, that amongst my honoured and beloved hearers of this society,

there is a pretty large proportion of  
 "young men." I can truly say, I am,  
 as it is certainly my duty to be, tenderly  
 concerned for their interest, reputation  
 and honour; for their real good in this  
 world, as well as their eternal happiness in  
 the other. And, though I have not been  
 unmindful of them in times past; yet,  
 methinks, it will be no more than a pro-  
 per piece of respect, and mark of my un-  
 feigned love and regard to them, if I adapt  
 and devote a number of discourses more  
 particularly to their service, agreeably to  
 the apostolic injunction in the text. This  
 is what is proposed; and may almighty  
 God, by his blessing, render these dis-  
 courses as truly useful and salutary to  
 them, as they are sincerely designed for  
 that end!

After some remarks on the principal  
 terms in the text, the method which, by  
 divine permission and assistance, will be  
 pursued, is as follows. It is intended,

First, Somewhat distinctly to explain to my young brethren, the nature of that sobriety which is spoken of in the text; and to recommend it in a cursory way.

Secondly, to point out, particularly, some of the many sins, follies, and criminal excesses, which are repugnant to it: and against which young men especially, may need to be cautioned.

Thirdly, It is proposed, more largely and distinctly, to exhort them to this sobriety of mind, and to dissuade them from the contrary. And,

Fourthly, To shew them the extreme folly and danger of delaying to be sober-minded, till they are farther advanced in years; the common, and often fatal error of the young.

Let me make some remarks on the principal terms of the text, before I pro-

ced to the main design, as represented above. And,

1. The persons who are to be thus exhorted, are "young men." It may not be amiss just to observe here, that what is translated young men, in two words, is only one in the original: the "young," or "younger," in the plural number, with a masculine termination to denote the sex intended; there being nothing besides this termination, to warrant the addition of the word "men," as in our common translation: with which, however, I would not be thought to find any fault on this account. For the original word is in general well enough rendered thus. Under this term, or these terms [young men] may be comprehended all persons of that sex, between children, and those whom we commonly call middle-aged persons.

Human life, or the age of man, has been variously divided. One, and I be-



lieve, a pretty ancient method of dividing it, is into four periods, viz. childhood and youth; complete, perfect manhood, and old age. Those who divide it thus, reckon the state of childhood, from the birth to fourteen years; of youth, from fourteen to about twenty-five; of complete, perfect manhood, from twenty-five to fifty; and of old age, from thence forward till death; whether that come at the end of threescore years and ten, or by reason of strength, not till fourscore years; or though people should live still longer “in labour and sorrow\*.”

Neither the holy scriptures, nor moral discourses in general, aim at precision in such matters as these. It would, indeed, be no better than trifling, to insist, in discourses of this kind, upon the punctilio of a few weeks, months, or even years.

It may be farther remarked here, that when, in common discourse, we speak of young men, we often mean those that are in a single state, or the unmarried in contradistinction from the married, though some of the former are OLDER than many of the latter. But the apostle does not appear to speak of young men in this restrained sense, exclusively of the married; but rather to include both; though he might probably have a more particular view to the former. That he does not speak of the unmarried by way of distinction from the married, is at least probable from what he had just before said concerning the young women, as he calls them; [ver. 4.] some of whom he never-

themselves, supposes to be married, to have husbands, and children; "That they may teach the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, &c." From hence it may be naturally inferred, that the apostle, in the next verse but one speaking of young men, did not intend to be understood of the unmarried only: especially if it be considered that some of these, who have never entered into that state of life, which he says "is honourable in all," instead of being young, are indeed O.L.D.—However, as was intimated before, the apostle may naturally be supposed to have had the unmarried more especially in his eye; as being, perhaps, at once the greater number; and standing in some peculiar need of such an exhortation to sobriety—

It is accordingly designed to accommodate my discourses upon this subject, more particularly to those whom we com-

monly mean by young men, or the unmarried. But this, it is hoped, will not prevent others, the married, and even the aged of both sexes, from reaping some benefit from them. For, as sobriety, virtue, or true religion, is one uniform thing, in which all persons, of whatever age, sex, or condition, are concerned; so whatever is said upon this universally interesting subject, if said with tolerable propriety, may be in some measure for the edification of all in general, though it be most particularly adapted and directed to "young men." But,

2. It will be proper to give you here a brief explanation of the term "sober-minded;" and, hereby, some general idea what that is, to which the apostle would have young men exhorted.

The original word and its derivatives are used, sometimes in a more narrow or restrained, and sometimes in a more ex-



tensive, comprehensive sense. When used in the former, they may signify, and are translated, grave, chaste, temperate, in opposition to lightness, lewdness, and an immoderate indulgence of the sensual appetites. They are used in such a restrained sense, even in several places of this same chapter; of which it is unnecessary to give particular instances. And in the like restrained sense the English word "sober," is often used. But the original may well bear a much more comprehensive meaning. It may signify, to be of a "sound mind" in general; to have an enlightened, a well-informed and healthy mind, a mind, rightly disposed; a proper temper, a duly regulated will and affections, accompanied by a corresponding external behaviour: in opposition to an erroneous, ignorant mind; a blind and depraved, a carnal or fleshly mind, or mind set upon folly and vanity; a disorderly, unruly will, and

affections, and those evil practices, which are the natural fruit and consequence of having a mind thus darkened and corrupted. The original word will very easily and naturally bear such an extensive signification as this\*. And there is the more reason for understanding it thus in the text because the apostle, directing Titus as to his ministerial application to young men, sums all up in this single word, that he should exhort them to be "sober-minded." whereas he branches out into several particulars, in what he says with reference to aged men, aged women, and young women, in the preceding context; and to servants, in the verses following. From hence it appears pretty evident, that this single word was designed to comprehend a great deal in it; in short, every thing, in effect, to which young men need to be exhorted. I

\* SOPHRONEIN, sobrius esse, sapere, vel sanā mente esse præditus. SOPHRONISMOS, sanitas animi, sapientia. Vid. 2 Tim. i. 7.---"a sound mind."

therefore understand it much in the same latitude and extent, that Solomon commonly uses the word wisdom, in his writings, viz. as comprehending true religion in general, both in principle and practice; allowing only for the difference of times and circumstances, or of the dispensations which Solomon and we are under. — He under the Mosaic, and we, the Christian.

3. The next thing, and all that is farther necessary to be considered, for the explanation of the text, is the manner of address which the apostle enjoins Titus to use, expressed by the word "exhortation." — Young men likewise "exhort," &c. And, what this implies and supposes in it, may appear from the following observations.

(1.) Exhortation differs widely, in the nature and idea of it from COMMANDING, imperiously injoining a thing upon

another, or authoritatively requiring it, as a master may command, injoin, or require any thing of, his servants. The ministers of the gospel have no such authority as this over old or young. Even the inspired apostles claimed no such power; declaring that they had no dominion over the faith of others: and they particularly admonish other ministers, not to behave themselves as "lords over God's heritage."

(2) Ministerial exhortation differs, on the other hand, from merely REQUESTING something of another, or expressing a simple DESIRE of it. One person may, in numberless instances, express a desire that another would do this or that, and yet not exhort him to it. For example, if a poor man should make known his wants to his neighbour, and ask an alms of him, no one would call this "exhorting" him to be charitable, or merciful.



(3.) Christian and ministerial exhortation, implies in it, reasoning, urging, and endeavouring to persuade, by the use of such arguments as are adapted to touch the conscience, to move the will, and to excite people to the performance of what is considered as their duty, or that which they ought to do; pressing it upon them with earnestness, and a proper pathos, as being of great importance. So that the manner of address expressed by the word exhortation, is a medium betwixt commanding and simply desiring a thing; the former of which supposeth such an authority as no minister of the gospel has, and the latter of which implies nothing more than what a child might do as well as an apostle.

(4.) The use of exhortation, as now explained, supposes men, even the young, to be reasonable creatures; capable of understanding what is said to them; of seeing the force, and feeling the weight, of

rational arguments; and so, of being influenced by them. No man, in the due exercise of his own reason, employs it in giving exhortations to irrational creatures; to such as are, in their own nature, incapable of being wrought upon, or moved by such means; on a stock or a stone, on the horse or mule, which have no understanding. The end of exhortation is to move, to incline the will, by offering proper, intelligible motives and arguments to the understanding, or conscience; as was said before.

(5.) Exhorting young men or others, to be sober-minded, supposes that they need it, by reason of some natural or adventitious aversion, or disinclination thereto: at least it supposes, that they need further information; and to have motives, or arguments set before them in a stronger light, so as to touch their hearts, and give a proper turn to their will and affections. For there would be no room, at

least no occasion, for exhortation, if their minds were supposed to be already properly informed, and their wills, hearts, and affections under due regulation; such as they ought to be under.

(6.) Such exhortation does not, however, suppose that the great end or design of it is to be answered merely by its own power, force or energy, independently of the blessing and grace of God concurring. What it really supposes, as was said before, is, a reasonable creature, or a proper subject, a free, moral agent, one naturally capable of understanding, and being influenced by rational motives; and, at the same time, one that needs instruction and excitement, in respect of some natural or adventitious darkness of mind, or irregularity of the will and affections. But, whether the best adapted exhortations that man can give, shall be effectual in the event, to answer the proposed end, depends upon God. For it is not with-

out his gracious influence, that these arguments will actually so touch the heart, as to produce their designed effect, however rational or scriptural they may be.

There is really no true sobriety, no good fruit, no increase, no spiritual harvest, besides that which God giveth, even though a Paul planteth, and an Apollos watereth: as, indeed, there is not any fruit, any harvest produced even in the natural world, without his secret energy and blessing, however diligent or skilful the husbandman may be.

(7.) Christian and ministerial exhortation implies in it, a kind, friendly and courteous manner of address, in opposition to a rough, haughty and imperious one. The apostle well knew, that it was by gentle and paternal treatment, rather than by harshness, rigour and severity, that young men are, by the blessing of God, to be made sober-minded, virtuous and good. He therefore directs Titus to



“exhort” them to be so. The same apostle in his first epistle to Timothy, written with the like general design with this to Titus, particularly enjoins upon him a respectful, courteous and obliging manner of treating all, both the old and young of both sexes. “Rebuke not an elder,” says he, (by an elder, here, doubtless meaning an old man only, not a pastor or bishop) “but entreat him as a father;” “and the younger men as BRETHREN;” “the elder women as mothers, the younger as sisters, with all purity.” And in his second epistle to the same person, he gives him the following caution against a rough and arrogant behaviour in his ministerial capacity. “The servant of the Lord must not strive,” says he, “but be gentle unto ALL men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.” The same great apostle appeals to the

Theſſalonians as witneſſes of the kind and paternal manner, in which he conducted himſelf towards them, when he preached the goſpel among them: “Ye know,” ſays he, “how we EXHORTED, and “COMFORTED, and CHARGED every “one of you, AS A FATHER DOETH “HIS CHILDREN, that ye would walk “worthy of God, who hath called you “unto his kingdom and glory \*.”

Theſe paſſages may help to inform us, what ſort or manner of addreſs the apoſtle intended, by the word “exhortation;”—how great a regard he had for decorum, meekneſs and decency, in the miniſters of the goſpel; and how tenderly, kindly and courteouſly he would have even “young men” treated by them. If theſe rules have not been duly obſerved by all miniſters ſince; if ill-natured reproaches, revilings, angry invectives, and harſh, imperious menaces, have been ſometimes

\* Firſt epiſt. chap. ii.

heard, instead of the kind voice of exhortation and gentle persuasion, in the spirit of meekness and charity; it is not because the ministers of the gospel are not sufficiently warned against such a prostitution of their sacred office and character, in the holy scriptures. Besides: religion is a reasonable service. It requires in the very nature of it, an enlightened mind, a convinced judgment, the consent, approbation and love of the heart; as being in itself most amiable, the foundation of all true happiness here and hereafter. And, surely, this conviction of its excellency, this complacency in, and love to it, are not to be produced, either in the old or young, by reproaches, invectives, or an imperious address, in the teachers of religion. In this respect, very particularly, the apostolic maxim will ever hold true; that "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." And these rules of charity and decorum, my beloved young brethren, shall stand as a perpetual

reproach to myself, if I deviate from them by railing at, reviling, or lording it over you, instead of "exhorting you to be sober-minded." But,

(8.) It would be a wrong inference from what has been said respecting this point, that these ministerial exhortations may therefore be innocently disregarded: or, that those to whom they are given, are at liberty either to receive or reject them, without any danger of incurring the displeasure of God. Exhortations that are founded in truth and reason, and are according to the word and will of God, by whomsoever given, cannot be despised or set at nought, without guilt and peril. The ministers of the gospel are indispensibly obliged to take heed, what they deliver as his word and will; what they exhort you to, not "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." And if they do the latter, either knowingly and wilfully, or through a criminal ne-



glect to inform themselves what they ought to preach, great is their guilt, and great the condemnation which belongs to them. Neither, on this supposition, are you obliged to believe them, or to regard their exhortations ; nay, you are bound in reason, duty, and conscience to reject them. But, on the other hand, if they deliver to you real and important truth ; if they exhort you to what is according to the word and will of God : certainly such exhortations as these are, in their own nature, binding. I mean, they are obligatory upon your consciences : you cannot disregard them, without acting contrary to reason, without sinning against God, and exposing yourselves, hereby, to his righteous displeasure. What though the ministers of the gospel are not your masters, or lords ? What though they have no authority to command you how you shall conduct yourselves ? What though they have no right to call you to an account, for contemning and disre-

garding their exhortations? or to harm you in any respect whatsoever, as certainly they have not. Yet are you not accountable to God? Are you not accountable to yourselves? Are you at liberty to act unreasonably? Have you a right to reject the truth? the commandments of God? Are you without law to him? Have you, in short, a right to reject any exhortations that are given you agreeable to his word and will, by those who, in his providence, sustain the character and relation of teachers and instructors to you? or even by any other person? You cannot think you have any such right as this, to do wrong; or that you may "use liberty for a cloak of maliciousness."

In many cases, counsels and exhortations are refuseable; or they may be rejected without guilt or danger. But this is only when they are in their nature bad, or indifferent, doubtful, or merely prudential. No exhortations of this nature,

are binding upon the conscience; but the persons to whom they are given, are at liberty to reject them, if they chuse to do so; yea, they are in reason and conscience bound to do it, as to those counsels that are positively bad; as was observed before. But when you are exhorted to be SOBER-MINDED; when you are counselled to receive and embrace the truth, sufficiently proved to be such; when you are persuaded to do what is in its nature fit and reasonable to be done; when you are admonished to fear God, and keep his commandments; in a word, when you are exhorted to do your duty, and what God himself requires of you; certainly these are counsels and exhortations of such a kind, that they cannot be disregarded without great guilt and danger. They do not come under the head of indifferent, doubtful, or merely prudential counsels; much less, under that of bad ones: but they are such as ought to have all the weight and influence of commands; even

the commands of God himself. Such, indeed, they are, in one sense: for God authoritatively requires of you, whatsoever you are exhorted to, conformably to reason, his word and will, whoever the exhorters themselves may be; and although they have no dominion over you, nor any right to exact an account of your behaviour, except in the way of sober remonstrance, expostulation, and friendly reproof, if there should be occasion for it.

If the young men of Crete had not "suffered the word of exhortation" from Titus, but scorned and rejected it; would they not have been justly blameable? Without doubt. If you should do the like, what would be the consequence? You need not be told. The obligation to regard and follow exhortations, depends much less upon the character, office, or qualifications of him that gives them, than it does upon the nature of the exhortations themselves. Though, as to the



former, there is no evidence, nor even probability, that Titus was an inspired preacher. He received his doctrine and directions from the apostle. If others therefore, though the meanest of Christ's ministers, follow the doctrine and directions of the same apostle, of all the apostles, and even of Christ himself; will not their exhortations be as binding upon you, as those of Titus were upon the Cretan youth?—"Judge even of yourselves what "is right."

(9.) Although the term exhortation implies in it a friendly and courteous manner of address; yet, certainly, it is not designed in opposition to REPROVING and REBUKING those that do evil, when there is just occasion for it. For, in the same chapter, the apostle enjoins Titus to do thus: "These things speak and exhort, and REBUKE with all authority; "let no man despise thee." Where you will observe, that exhorting and rebu-

king are joined together ; so that the former could not be intended in the text, in opposition to the latter. And in the preceding chapter, speaking of the gross immoralities of the Cretans, as even one of their own poets had characterized them, he immediately subjoins, " This witness " is true ; wherefore **REBUKE THEM** " **SHARPLY \***," &c. In his epistle to Timothy, he also says, " Them that sin, " rebuke before all, that others also may " fear †." Or, as it might, and, I suppose, ought to be translated : " Them that " sin before all, rebuke," &c. For, surely, they were not to be rebuked before all, or in a public, solemn manner, unless they had sinned before all, or their crimes were notorious and public ; as the common reading implies.

But it is farther to be observed here, that even reproof and rebuke, which are needful in some cases, and which may

\* Chap. i. 12, 13.

† 1 Tim. v. 20.

seem to imply somewhat of rigour and severity in their nature; may yet be administered in a truly friendly and paternal manner. And they doubtless ought to be given in such a way, if possible, as to convince those to whom they are given, that they are kindly intended for their amendment, and real good; since, otherwise, there is little or no benefit to be hoped from them. Yea, they are more likely to have a bad, than a good effect, if they are seen to proceed from pride, resentment and anger, or are attended with insulting and reviling expressions. And, that the apostle did not design such rebukes as these, but quite contrary ones, in the spirit of charity and meekness, is sufficiently evident from his own words, in his second epistle to Timothy; where he joins reproving, rebuking and exhorting, together; saying, "Reprove, rebuke, exhort WITH ALL LONG-SUFFERING AND DOCTRINE;" and this, even where he is speaking pro-

fessedly of those, who “ would not en-  
“ dure sound doctrine \*.”

(10.) And lastly, It cannot reasonably be thought inconsistent with the kindness, meekness and gentleness of the gospel, or of that manner of address which is implied in the word exhortation, to lay open the folly and danger of vice, or of disregarding the word and commandments of God, in the plainest, fullest and most forcible manner possible: to shew to all people, whether old or young, the guilt and misery of a state of alienation from God, and of enmity to him in their minds by wicked works; together with the imminent hazard which wicked men are in, of perishing in their sins; and “ warning them “ to flee from the wrath to come.” It is not here meant, that this may be done by prejudging, or pointing out particular persons, as the heirs of wrath and perdition; which were indeed an abominable

\* Chap. iv. 2, 3.



piece of arrogance and presumption; but, by shewing in a clear and forcible manner, that the paths of vice and folly, by whomsoever trodden, are the paths that lead to destruction.

There are some persons, who profess to have a relish for discourses upon the excellency and rewards of moral virtue, with exhortations to the practice of it; and yet do not well like to have the evil and danger of sin insisted on; or the terrors of the Lord set before them. This is what some people consider as favouring of harshness, sourness and severity; hardly consistent with the meekness and charity which become the ministers of the gospel. Nor, indeed, will I deny, that these topics may be treated upon, not only in a manner that is very justly disgustful, but too frequently; or to the neglect of others which are equally proper and useful; and are, at the same time, more pleasing; yea, probably, better adapted to produce.

a good effect upon the minds of many persons. And, to say the least, I do not envy those men their particular temper, and cast of mind, who seem to be hardly ever so much in their element, as when they are thundering “hell and damnation” in the ears of people, with all the most frightful images and expressions, which they can collect together.

But still, these less agreeable topics of persuasion, are in themselves very proper and necessary: and the insisting on them at times, in a scriptural way, ought not to be imputed to sourness, gloominess or moroseness of temper; or to any want of charity and good-will. Is the physician thought to be wanting in kindness, good-will or respect to his patient, for letting him know, in some cases, the nature and danger of his disease? Especially if, at the same time, he informs him of the remedy; exhorts him to use it, and to take all possible care and pains, that he may

recover his health, and live happily. The disease would be the same in itself, though the patient were not thus informed concerning it; and the real danger, very often the greater, for a reason too obvious to need mentioning. Is the pilot who, at a distance, observes a vessel in a storm, just running upon rocks or quicksands, and likely to be foundered in a few minutes, thought to want good-will to the people on board, because he gives them the signal of their danger, and directs them to a secure harbour! Is the watchman that cries "Fire" aloud in the night, through the streets of a city, to awake the sleeping inhabitants, lest they should be consumed in their beds; calling upon them to arise, and extinguish the flames, supposed for that reason, to want benevolence to them, and a proper concern for their welfare! No one is so absurd as to reason after this rate. In these cases, neither the physician, the pilot, nor the

watchman MAKES the danger; but only DISCOVERS it, and EXHORTS those whom it concerns, to escape it: which, surely, are acts of kindness and charity; and such as each of them was under obligation to perform. To have done otherwise, would have been at once a neglect of duty, and great cruelty.

Why then should it be thought unkind, or ungenerous, in the spiritual physician under Christ the chief, to shew to youth, or others, their spiritual diseases? their danger of eternal death? Especially if, at the same time, he shews the remedy, the means of obtaining eternal life, and exhorts to the use thereof. Why should it be thought an unkindness for the spiritual pilot, to warn those of their danger, whom he sees carried down the gulph of error and vice with a rapid course; and ready to be swallowed up in the abyss of destruction and misery? Especially if, at



the same time, he points them to the great ARK, and to a secure haven; where neither winds, nor waves, nor storms can hurt them. Why should it be accounted a cruel thing in the spiritual watchman, to awaken those that are asleep in their sins, and every moment in danger of being consumed in the fire of God's indignation?—to “cry aloud,” and even to “lift up his voice like a trumpet;” exhorting them, if I may so express it, to extinguish those terrible flames with the tears of repentance, while there is opportunity for it? Is not this the truest charity? As was said in the other cases, he does not MAKE, but only GIVE WARNING of the danger, that it may be escaped. And has not God enjoined this upon all who are, by office, the preachers of righteousness? He says to each of them, in effect, as he did to the prophet of old: “Son of man, I have made thee a watchman to the house of

40 Israel : therefore hear the word at MY  
 41 MOUTH ; and give them warning from  
 42 ME. When I say unto the wicked,  
 43 Thou shalt surely die ; and thou givest  
 44 him not warning, nor speakest to warn  
 45 the wicked from his wicked way to save  
 46 his life ; the same wicked man shall die  
 47 in his iniquity ; but his blood will I  
 48 require AT THY HAND. Yet if thou  
 49 warn the wicked, and he turn not from  
 50 his wickedness, nor from his wicked  
 51 way, he shall die in his iniquity ; but  
 52 thou hast delivered THY SOUL.

It should also be remembered, that ex-  
 hortating young men, or others, to be so-  
 ber-minded, must, by natural and just  
 implication intend, using all arguments  
 and motives that are proper to that end.  
 And therefore, such as the last-mentioned,  
 must not, cannot be omitted ; though  
 there are many others to be insisted on in

Ezek. chap. iii.

the same general view. Indeed a minister of the gospel shews no less benevolence and tenderness to his hearers, by admonishing them of the danger of infidelity and impenitence, provided it is done in a rational and scriptural way; than by exhorting them to be sober-minded, wise and virtuous, from a consideration of the present peace, and future rewards of religion: such considerations as those which now close this discourse, addressed by Solomon to his own son; and found among those excellent proverbs, the design of which was, “to give subtlety to the  
“ simple, to the YOUNG MAN knowledge and understanding.”—“My son  
“ —Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandize of it  
“ is better than the merchandize of silver, and the gain thereof than fine  
“ gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst de-

“ fire, are not to be compared unto her.  
 “ Length of days is in her right-hand:  
 “ and in her left-hand riches and ho-  
 “ nour. Her ways are ways of pleasant-  
 “ ness, and all her paths are peace. She  
 “ is a tree of life to them that lay hold  
 “ upon her: and happy is every one that  
 “ retaineth her \*.”

\* Prov. iii. 11---18.

and virtuous, from a covetous and ambitious  
 present peace, and future rewards of re-  
 gion: such considerations as those which  
 how close this discourse, addressed by So-  
 mon to his own son, and found among  
 some excellent proverbs, the design of  
 which was, to give instruction to the  
 simple, to the young man, know-  
 ledge and understanding. My son  
 —Happy is the man that understandeth wil-  
 dom, and the man that getteth under-  
 standing. For the merchandise of ill-  
 is better than the merchandise of sil-  
 ver, and the gain thereof than fine  
 gold. She is more precious than ru-  
 bes, and all the things that can be de-



SERMON II

THE SECOND OF THE TWO PARTS

SERMON II

OF

OF

SERMON II

IN GENERAL

AS TO

PRINCIPLES

IMPLYING A

BELIEF OF GOD'S BEING, PER

FECTIONS AND PROVIDENCE,

AND OF THE

CHRISTIAN REVELATION

S E R M O N II.  
O F  
S O B R I E T Y  
I N G E N E R A L,  
A S T O  
P R I N C I P L E;  
I M P L Y I N G A  
B E L I E F o f G O D ' s B E I N G, P E R -  
F E C T I O N S a n d P R O V I D E N C E;  
A N D O F T H E  
C H R I S T I A N R E V E L A T I O N.

S E R M O N II  
S E R M O N II

TITUS II

S O B R I E T Y  
Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded.  
IN GENERAL

M Y beloved son Titus, I have written to thee  
a design to thee, a number of dis-  
courses particularly to your service, as a  
mark of the respect and good will which  
I bear to you, as well as from a regard  
to my duty more immediately to God,  
whose I am, and whom I love with my  
heart, though in weakness. I thought I  
might very properly make these words of  
the apostle Paul to Titus, the object of  
my intended discourse.

I have already made some remarks on  
Titus and the epistle to him, on the  
words "young men" and "love"

## S E R M O N II.

### TITUS ii. 6.

*Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded.*

**M**Y beloved young brethren, having a design to adapt a number of discourses particularly to your service, as a mark of the respect and good-will which I bear to you, as well as from a regard to my duty more immediately to God, whose I am, and whom I serve with my spirit, though in weakness: I thought I might very properly make these words of the apostle Paul to Titus, the subject of my intended discourses.

I have already made some remarks on Titus and the epistle to him; on the terms “ young men,” and “ sober-



"minded;" and considered, more particularly, what that manner of address implies in it, which is expressed in the text by the word "exhortation." These several observations were designed only as introductory to my main design; which was exhibited in the preceding discourse, under four general heads. The first of these, to which I shall now proceed, was,

First, By divine assistance, somewhat distinctly to explain to you the nature of that sobriety, which is spoken of in the text; and to recommend it you in a cursory way.

But, let me here just remind you of something observed in the preceding discourse; that the original Greek word, though perhaps most commonly used in a restrained sense, to signify being grave, chaste, temperate or moderate; yet easily and naturally admits a very extensive

meaning. It may comprehend all that is commonly intended in the writings of Solomon, by "wisdom;" i. e. true religion in general, both in principle and practice. And there is, if I mistake not, a particular positive reason for understanding it in such a latitude in the text. In this comprehensive sense, it will accordingly be understood in the ensuing discourses.

For the farther illustration hereof, it may be observed that this expression, "sober-minded," naturally suggests to us, that true sobriety, or all true wisdom, begins, and has its seat in the mind, soul or spirit; the intellectual, immortal, and most excellent part of our compound nature: that it consists in the soul's, or mind's being rightly informed, disposed, and under due regulation. If the mind be not duly enlightened, rightly affected, and under a proper influence, no person, whether old or young, can be truly wise,

virtuous or sober. Not the body, but the mind itself, is most properly the residence, or seat, of true wisdom and sobriety; of all morally good qualities. However inoffensive, blameless or regular a person's external behaviour in life may be; yet if you suppose him at the same time to have a mind destitute of knowledge, uninformed with truth, void of sincerity and good principle; or, in one word, if you suppose him destitute of a "sober mind," in the strict, literal sense of these words, you certainly suppose him to be neither wise nor good, in a moral sense. You suppose, indeed, some appearance of wisdom, of sobriety, or of virtue; but it is only the appearance, not the reality; the shadow without the substance. Or, if I may be indulged the expression, you suppose a fair, magnificent temple, but no Deity, no God within. Nay, farther; if you suppose the soul, or mind of man, unadorned with knowledge, virtue, and good principle;

do you not, of consequence, suppose it to be deformed and debased by error, ignorance, vice, or positively bad principles? Doubtless you do. The mind of an infant has, indeed, been considered by some, as a CHARTE BLANCHE, or clean paper, fit to receive any inscription, impression or character; and though not endowed with any knowledge or virtue, still not positively erroneous, vitiated, or morally corrupted: with the truth and justness of which supposition, I am not now concerned. But you cannot even suppose a person that is come to years, so as to be a moral agent, in such a middle state as this, betwixt knowledge and error, good and evil dispositions. If such a person, though but a young man, is destitute of wisdom, virtue, and a right turn of mind, he is certainly and positively erroneous, foolish, vicious, or wrongly disposed. Whatever may be imagined respecting the soul of an infant; yet the soul of such a moral agent, cannot be conceived destitute



tute of all thought and sentiment, of all opinion and principles; and if it is not under the influence of such as are true and right, virtuous and good; must of course be defiled, corrupted and depraved by such as are erroneous and vicious; as was said before. So that though I just now compared a person, who is apparently sober or virtuous, but without sincerity, without good principle, to a beautiful temple in which no Deity resides; it now seems that such a one may, with far more propriety, be likened to a "whited sepulchre, which indeed appears beautiful outward, but is within full of dead mens bones, and of all uncleanness \*,"

Now, if the very "mind and conscience are thus defiled," [thus under the influence of error, of wrong dispositions and affections; surely you cannot think such a person "sober-minded," whatever his external appearance may be. Let me

\* Matt. xxiii. 27.

just add here, that though, in many characters, there is such a strange mixture of wisdom and folly, virtue and vice, sincerity and hypocrisy, that it is next to impossible for any mortal to determine, whether the good or the bad qualities predominate, so as to constitute the general character; yet doubtless, either the former or the latter actually do so in every man. For otherwise, there would be a moral agent without any moral character! — unless this can be justly accounted one — That he is neither wise nor foolish, virtuous nor vicious, good nor bad, but something, no one can tell what, between both: which, to be sure, will not be easily admitted even as a supposeable case or fact, by those that have given their attention to the important subject of morals and religion.

But though it is suggested by the very expression in the text, that the mind itself is the seat of virtue, wisdom or sobriety;

yet you are not to imagine that when you are exhorted to be sober-minded, this exhortation respects your minds, or inner man only; or, that it has no reference to your outward behaviour. There is an external sobriety of the manners; as well as an internal one of the mind; though the latter is, indeed, the first to be considered and regarded. But the mind being not right, nor duly informed and disposed; your outward actions and conversation are also to be under a proper regulation; such as corresponds to a sober mind. Yea, farther, if your minds are endowed with true wisdom of sobriety, your outward conduct will, without doubt, be sober and regular also. These things cannot well be separated even in imagination. The former of them infers the latter; though the latter of them does not, at least not so necessarily, infer the former. For we may much more easily conceive of a person's having the external appearance of virtue and sobriety, in his be-

haviour, without the reality of it in his mind; than he can, on the other hand, conceive of his being really wise, or sober-minded, and yet commonly acting foolishly and viciously. The former is not an impossibility; but the latter is, even in nature. There being, therefore, such a close and manifest connection betwixt sobriety of mind, and of conversation, both which are necessary to constitute a truly good character; the exhortation which we are considering, must be supposed to respect and comprehend both; the former of them, indeed, primarily, and most directly; and the latter of them indirectly, and consequentially; but yet no less truly and certainly than it does the other, the sobriety of the mind. cannot well be separated from the latter The former of them infers the latter. It should be farther observed, that there are not, properly speaking, two of more different kinds of true sobriety, wisdom or religion; one for the old, another for the middle-aged, and a third for the



young; or one for male, another for female: but there is one kind of religion, wisdom or sobriety for all; even as there is but one God, one Lord, one faith, one hope of our calling; one general rule, or manner of conversation, prescribed for all. There are, indeed, some peculiar obligations and duties resulting from our respective relations and circumstances in life. There are certain things incumbent upon the aged, which are not so, upon the young; at least not in the same degree: as, on the other hand, there are some, to which youth are more especially obliged; and some follies, indiscretions and vices, which they need more particularly to be warned against. But these are no more than circumstantial differences. True sobriety, wisdom or religion, is still essentially one and the same thing, not only in old and young, but in male and female, bond and free; the particular duties which are proper and peculiar to these states or conditions respec-

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tively, making no essential difference. As a man in health may in reason be bound to do some things which a sick one is not, and vice versa; or as a man in civil office and authority may be bound to do some things which a man in a private capacity is not obliged to do, yea, cannot do lawfully or innocently; and yet a truly wise and sober man is of the same religion both in health and sickness, and whether he sustains a public, or only a private character: so the old and the young, male and female, the great and small, all persons in general, are under obligation to be of the same religion, essentially considered, notwithstanding some differences in their respective duties, arising out of their particular relations and circumstances in life. And the same spirit of truth, of virtue and wisdom, actually resides, operates in, and actuates them all, if they are truly sober-minded.

Now, that sobriety of mind to which young men are to be exhorted, is unquestionably a RELIGIOUS sobriety; founded in a due regard to almighty God; conformable to the dictates of right reason, and such as all persons in general, of whatever age or condition, are under obligation to; and including, moreover, whatever particular duties are, either exclusively, or more especially, incumbent upon the young. It cannot, surely, be supposed, that the apostle, in the text, intended any thing short of a truly religious, pious, or godly sobriety of mind; as was just now intimated. And there is the more reason for particularly observing this to you; because there is something that often passes in the world under the name of sobriety, which, though really implied and comprehended therein, and therefore good and commendable in its place, does yet by no means come up to the full and proper idea thereof. But his proper worldly business, being

essentially defective; being without any piety at bottom.

This matter deserves to be more particularly stated and explained. We sometimes speak of sobriety particularly in opposition to intemperance in eating and drinking; and when we mention any one as a sober man, we mean, perhaps, no more than that he is free from these gross and shameful vices. Sometimes by a sober man, we mean only one that is not addicted to lewd, lascivious practices. Sometimes by a sober man, we mean no more than one who is externally grave and solid, in contradistinction from a light, airy and fantastic one. Sometimes we use the same word in a larger sense; meaning perhaps, by a sober man, one that is of a grave and serious deportment in general; free from all the gross vices of intemperance and debauchery, of rioting and lasciviousness; and one that steadily minds his proper worldly business, being, in



that respect, a good member of society. Now, although these things are all really commendable in their places, and, without doubt, included in that sobriety of mind which is intended in the text; yet they are an extremely imperfect and deficient notion of it. This appears, indeed, in some measure, from what has been already said, respecting the necessity of internal sobriety; which is not necessarily implied in such an externally grave and sober conversation. But what I still more particularly intend here, is, that this idea of sobriety is very defective and imperfect, inasmuch as it does not necessarily suppose a due regard to God, or any truly RELIGIOUS principle, as the spring and source of it.

An atheist, or the fool who saith in his heart, There is no God, may possibly be a sober man in this low and partial sense. There is such a thing as constitutional gravity, or a natural sedateness

and solidity, and sort of aversion to those gross vices in some men : or a mere sense of decency may preserve some therefrom, while they are destitute both of the love and fear of God, or of all religious principle. A person may abstain from them, and in that partial sense be a sober man, from worldly prudence and policy only ; motives, which though not positively evil, yet cannot be accounted good in a religious, or even moral sense : for, to be good in this sense, supposes a regard to God, and to moral obligations.

Let me add, though it may seem strange, perhaps, at the first thought, that it is possible this external sobriety of behaviour may, in some cases, be owing to a positively wrong and vicious principle : so that if a person were of less degenerate and depraved mind than he is in some respects, he would of course also have less of this outward gravity and sobriety. This observation might be illustrated and

confirmed by divers examples, but one may suffice. A man, then, may be worldly-minded and covetous to a prodigious degree; having all his thoughts and desires centred in earthly riches, and his mind continually employed on the methods of obtaining and keeping them; while he "says to the gold, Thou art my hope; and to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence." Now this is unquestionably an irrational, vicious principle; a positively wrong and depraved turn of mind. And yet it is, in its natural consequences and operations, a check, and powerful restraint to the vices of lewdness and luxury, of riot and debauchery. Such a predominant, boundless love of riches, naturally and directly leads to a diligent application to worldly business; to an external gravity of deportment; and to sobriety of conversation, in that partial sense of it, spoken of above; or as it stands in opposition to the wasting, impoverishing vices of idle-

ners, luxury, and an excessive indigence of the sensual appetites. These vices are, in their very nature, incompatible with extreme avarice. Nor will the world ever yet see a thorough miser, that was addicted to them; seldom one, who did not loudly declaim against them as odious, scandalous and R U I N O U S ones. Were such a grave, rich—poor—happy—miserable man, free from this particular predominant vice, he might very probably have less external sobriety; and, instead of always preaching against the follies, extravagancies, and criminal excesses of young men, sometimes condescend to make one of a party with them in those excesses—Mere pride, that hateful sin, may, in some cases, be supposed to produce the like external gravity and sobriety, by absorbing, as it were, all the feebler lusts and passions. In short, it comes to this at last, that one enormous, gigantic and voracious vice, the wasting, impoverishing vice of idle-



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"Like Aaron's serpent, swallows up  
"the rest \*."

Thus, you see, it is possible, not only  
for real, but great and enormous vices of  
the mind, to contribute to the appearance  
of virtue and sobriety in the external con-  
versation; particularly in the instances  
which have now been mentioned. But  
that sobriety to which all, and young men  
in particular, are to be exhorted, as was  
said before, is primarily an internal so-  
briety of the mind; and not merely so,  
but a truly religious sobriety, resulting  
from a proper regard to God, his autho-  
rity and commandments. Whatever so-  
briety, whether of mind or manners,  
or both, may be conceived of without  
piety, without religious principle; this  
is not that which is intended in the text.  
It is essentially defective; it does not de-  
serve the name of sobriety in a religious  
sense, though it may be so called in a ci-  
vil

• POPE.

vil or political one ; and though it may contribute to a man's reputation and interest in the world ; yea, may render him a very useful and respectable member of society. Nor should we, indeed, ever indulge to groundless suspicions about the sincerity of particular persons ; which were highly injurious and criminal.

It must be observed farther, that the sobriety to which you are exhorted, is not in general a religious, but a truly CHRISTIAN sobriety of mind and manners : such as corresponds to the faith of the gospel, and to the commandments of God as promulgated by his Son Jesus Christ ; and therefore presupposes belief in him as the light, the saviour and judge of the world.

We may be very certain that the great apostle Paul, (who himself desired neither to preach nor to know any thing, in comparison of " Jesus Christ and him crucified") giving directions to Titus as a minister of the gospel, and enjoining him

amongst other things, to exhort young men to sobriety; had in his mind nothing short of that sobriety which is in its nature truly christian, & agreeable to the glorious discoveries, and the genius of the gospel; such an one as is regulated by its precepts, and made manifest in a conversation, becoming this divine institution. It were quite unnatural to suppose that the apostle had in view, only such a sobriety as a meer pagan who believes the being of a God, may possibly be the subject of. Nay, it would be so, to suppose he intended only such a sobriety as a Jew, still under the Mosaic dispensation, might possess, or practise. It cannot be reasonably imagined, that he would have had Titus exhort the young men of Crete, who were partly Gentiles, and partly Jews by birth, to be sober-minded upon the principles of the Gentile theology, which were to vain and absurd; and which he himself every where declares: nor yet only upon the principles of natural religion; which

discover not any way wherein sinful creatures may certainly obtain eternal life: nor yet, lastly, upon the footing of the Mosaic law, which was "weak through the flesh;" and of which the same apostle himself says, that as many as are do the works of it, "are under a curse." If we consider the character of the writer, and of the person to whom he wrote, together with the time, occasion and circumstances hereof, we cannot doubt but that St. Paul's meaning was, that Titus should exhort the Cretan young men to receive the revelation of the grace of God by his Son from heaven, upon its proper evidences, and to live in a practical conformity to the holy precepts of the gospel.

That he intended nothing below, or short of, such a truly christian sobriety of mind, is farther evident from hence. The several exhortations which Titus is enjoined to give to the old and young, &c. respectively, are introduced thus, with particular reference to some persons,



“ whose mouths were to be stopped;—  
“ especially those of the circumcision;”—  
“ But speak thou,” says the apostle, the  
“ things which become SOUND DOC-  
“ TRINE: that the aged men,” &c.  
And one reason particularly assigned, why  
Titus should teach, and exhort to these  
things, and others practise them, is,  
“ that the word of God be not blas-  
“ phemed.” Now certainly, what the  
apostle intended by the word of God, and  
sound doctrine, is neither more nor less  
than the gospel of God. This, if proof  
were needed, would be manifest from a  
parallel passage in his first epistle to Ti-  
mothy—“ And if there be any other thing  
“ that is contrary to SOUND DOCTRINE,  
“ ACCORDING TO THE GLORIOUS  
“ GOSPEL OF THE BLESSED GOD, WHICH  
“ WAS COMMITTED TO MY TRUST †”.  
This gospel of the kingdom then, is the  
sound doctrine intended, and that word  
of God, which should not be blasphemed.

† 1 Tim. i. 10, 11.

Who then can doubt, but that the sobriety of mind spoken of by the apostle, is the same thing in effect, with the belief and practice of the christian religion? Or, if any like this expression better,—a practical faith in the gospel; though for my own part, I know of no real difference in the sense of them.

The same thing is farther manifest, beyond all doubt, from the words of the apostle a few verses after the text: where he suggests some other motives to, or reasons for, the observation of the several exhortations before-mentioned:—"That  
 " they may adorn the doctrine of God  
 " our Saviour in all things. For the  
 " grace of God—hath appeared—teach-  
 " ing us, that denying ungodliness and  
 " worldly lusts, we should live soberly—  
 " looking for that blessed hope, and—  
 " our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave  
 " himself for us, that he might redeem us,"  
 &c. The text being considered thus in

connection with what precedes and follows it; the sobriety intended therein, is evidently such a sobriety of mind, not as Socrates or Plato, not as Cicero or Seneca taught, though in some respects truly excellent; nor yet merely such as Moses and the prophets taught; much less still, such as Lord SMAFTSBURY and Lord BOLINGBROKE taught: but such as the LORD FROM HEAVEN, and his inspired apostles taught; and such as all are to practise, who hope to ascend thither where he is, to behold, and to partake of his glory. And whosoever pretends to exhort any, whether old or young, to be sober-minded, without keeping in view, and proceeding upon, this truly divine plan—the doctrine of our redemption from sin and death by Jesus Christ, and of life and immortality brought to light through the gospel, at best does his work by halves; and, by no means, frames his exhortation according to the manifest design, and true spirit of the text.

My young brethren, I have already given you some general and imperfect idea of the sobriety to which you are exhorted: nothing beyond this was intended by the foregoing remarks. Let me now descend to a more distinct explanation of it, in conformity to this general idea, and to these cursory observations, which I shall still keep in view; and if you should do the same, it might not be useless to you. In the first place then,

I. This sobriety of mind is founded in a firm belief of God's being and perfections, his moral government and universal providence, agreeably to the light of nature, or natural reason, and to the express doctrine of holy scripture; for these do not contradict, but mutually confirm and illustrate each other. One of the sacred writers uses a very bold, and equally noble figure, in speaking of the clear evidence which God, who is invisible, hath given of his existence and perfections, to man-



kind in general, by the visible effects of his power. "That which may be known of God," saith he, "is manifest in [or to] them" [the Gentile nations;] "for God hath shewn it unto them. For the INVISIBLE THINGS OF HIM from the creation of the world are CLEARLY SEEN, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead &c." Although the world by wisdom knew not God; i. e. though mankind in general did not actually attain to any tolerable knowledge of the true God by natural reason and philosophy; yet it is certain, even upon principles of reason, both that there is One, and but One God; an all-perfect being: who is underived, and absolutely independent: "Of whom, and through whom, and to whom [of consequence] are all things;" —all other persons and beings, whether visible or invisible,

even to the evil. Rom. i. 19, 20.

The divine attributes, as discovered to us by the wonderful works and word of God in conjunction, are, eternity, independence, or necessary self-existence; immensity, or omnipresence; incorporeity, or spirituality; boundless power, perfect knowledge, and unerring wisdom; perfect purity, holiness and justice, truth and faithfulness, goodness, mercy, and immutability. For in all these respects, in all truly divine perfections, God is necessarily, and therefore immutably the same, even from everlasting to everlasting, without variableness, or shadow of turning. And as God originally created all things; so he continually preserves, provides over, and governs them by his providence, in the most wise, righteous, good and gracious manner; being a lover of all virtue and goodness, and abhorring all vice and wickedness, even while he is merciful to the wicked; good and kind even to the unthankful and to the evil. It will not be amiss to observe further here,

that the holy Scriptures speak much oftener, and far more largely and particularly, of God's goodness and mercy, than of any of his other perfections; assuring us, "that the Lord is good to ALL, and his tender mercies over ALL his works;" that "God is love"—goodness and love itself, perfect and universal, eternal and immutable love: and it is repeated no less than twenty-six times in one psalm, that "his mercy endureth for ever\*."

Now, faith in God, his perfections and providence, and particularly in his goodness and mercy, is not only an essential ingredient in, but the very foundation of, all true sobriety, or religion. For, in the language of inspiration, which is in this respect at least, the language of reason also, "without faith it is impossible to please God; for he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that dili-

\* Psal cxxxvi.

“gently seek him \*.” Though I cannot but observe by the way, that some modern pretended reformers of the supposed errors and heresies among us, seem rather to have aimed at establishing it as a fundamental article of faith, that God is NOT “a rewarder of them that diligently seek him;” but that men may seek him, not only earnestly and diligently, but do so all their lives, and yet not find his favour extended to them, or finally receive any reward of him—except the reward of unrighteousness in eternal torments! But if this be accounted orthodoxy, I must, for my own part, humbly confess with the apostle Paul, “that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers; believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets,” [and the gospel of Christ also;] “and have HOPE TOWARDS GOD †” which, even the best men upon earth can hardly have;

\* Heb. xi. 6. † Acts xxiv. 14, 15.



upon the principles of such a spurious orthodoxy as that just now referred to.

But to return. If, instead of believing the existence and perfections, the moral government and universal providence of the equally great and good God, you have him not in all your thoughts; if you do not duly regard him; but banish him, as it were out of his own world, the universe which sprung from nothing at his word: if you do thus, it is impossible that you should have any true sobriety of mind, any real wisdom. For the knowledge or fear of the Lord, is even literally "the beginning of wisdom." They that know not God, know nothing as they ought to know it; nor do any thing as they ought to do it.

Let me therefore, my young brethren, take occasion here to caution you against listening with a favourable ear, to any atheistical notions; such as strike at the

being, attributes, or moral government of God; and, thereby, at the very root of all religion and virtue. There are not wanting those in this apostate, this foolish and wicked world, who scruple not even to tell others, they are fools, by intimating that they "say in their hearts, THERE IS NO GOD;" or at least, no such holy, wise and righteous one as is commonly supposed; none, from whom we have any thing to fear if we do evil, or to hope if we do well. And there are some young men, though I would charitably hope, not amongst you;—yea, some that are more advanced in years, who either from an unwillingness to part with their lusts, or, at best, from great levity of mind, and an affectation of singularity, listen with pleasure to such senseless notions, when they hear them advanced; and read the books with delight, in which some persons even of the last and present age, have shewn a strange ambition to record their own folly and impiety to the ages

that are to come. Take heed, my beloved brethren, lest any of you should also be carried away with these errors of the wicked; of such fools as these,

I hardly need desire you, by way of antidote against the poison, and mortal venom of such principles, to lift your eyes to the heavens above; to observe the stupendous magnitude, the regular motions, the beautiful order, of the numerous worlds that roll there; or to ask you, how they came there, and by whom they are preserved from age to age in this wonderful order and harmony. I scarce need, for this end, to desire you even to look down upon the earth, or to look round the world which you inhabit; in which there are innumerable, indefinite marks and characters of infinite power, of the most consummate wisdom and goodness. It will be sufficient if you consider these microcosms, these little worlds, your own bodies, which are indeed

“fearfully and wonderfully made;”  
 with amazing skill; an art truly admirable and astonishing to every attentive observer. And whose hand formed and fashioned these? Certainly no human one: the art, wisdom and power of all the sons of Adam united, would not suffice for the forming a single fly, emmit or mite. Nay, all human wisdom cannot even comprehend the workmanship and art of the least insect; though it may see enough thereof, to be at once convinced and confounded. What then will you say of your own bodies? Whose workmanship are they?

But if even your own bodies must necessarily be the product of a wisdom, a skill, an art and power, so much surpassing all that is human; what will you say of your minds, your souls, which direct and govern them? From whence come knowledge, reflexion, memory? From whence, will, choice and liberty? From



whence the power of at once looking back on what is past, and forward on what is future? Are these intellectual powers and faculties of yours, eternal and necessary? No. It is but a few days since you yourselves came into existence. Were they then without any cause? No. Nothing can be so, that is not both eternal and necessary. Were they then the product of inert, unknowing, senseless matter? That cannot be: knowledge, choice and power cannot, surely, be derived from that which is itself destitute of all knowledge, choice and power. From whence and from whom then, came these intellectual powers? To suppose that you need to be told, would hardly be consistent with the very supposition, that you are possessed of them. From hence appears at once, the being and the spirituality of God; and the extreme stupidity of all image-worship. For there never was a more rational, a more conclusive argument than this which follows—"For as-

"much then as we are the offspring  
"of God, we ought not to think that  
"the GODHEAD is like unto gold, or  
"silver, or stone graven by art, and  
"man's device \*."

Moreover: do not your moral faculties, particularly your sense of right and wrong, justice and injustice, demonstrate the moral character of Him, whose offspring you are? Undoubtedly, in the clearest manner; and, consequently that, under his government, virtue shall be rewarded and vice punished. Each man's own conscience, is in a sort a divine messenger, a prophet to himself; foretelling, as one may express it, "a day wherein  
"God will judge the world in righteousness." O then, let not this prophet within you, preach righteousness and sobriety, or prophecy to you in vain. If you hearken to the dictates of this prophet, one may very safely conclude,

\* Acts xviii. 29.

that you will not reject the testimony of those who appeared in the world in ancient times; and particularly, not “Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word, before God, and all the people.” [Luke xxiv. 19.] — But this naturally brings me to observe more distinctly, though in conformity to what was intimated before,

II. That the sobriety of mind to which you are exhorted, implies a belief of the gospel, or of the christian revelation: for it is not merely a religious, but a christian sobriety, that is intended in the text. And this certainly includes, or supposes, a belief of Christ’s gospel; a due regard to him in the high relation which he bears to mankind; a serious consideration of his person, character, doctrine, precepts; the design of his manifestation and sufferings in the flesh; his resurrection, ascension, the glory to which he is exalted; his future appearing, and the end and

consequences thereof. Without the knowledge, belief, and consideration of these things, there can be no sobriety of mind, deserving the name of christian. Let me therefore descend to a few particulars here; such as seem to me very important. In doing which, I shall be obliged to be brief, and shall of choice, as far as I think consistent with my own duty and your good, avoid every thing of controversy; in which I do not delight. And,

I. Of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is styled, in scripture, "the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature \*." He often alluded to, and sometimes spake expressly of, a "glory which he had with the FATHER before the world was." To be re-admitted into which glory, he once earnestly prayed, saying;—"O Father, glorify me with the glory to which he is exalted; that I may be glorified with him, as he has been glorified with thee, before the world began." Col. i. 15.



“ glorify thou me with thine own self,  
 “ with the glory which I had with thee †,”  
 &c. It is said of the Logos, or Word,  
 that he was “ in the beginning with  
 “ God,” and “ was God;” that “ all  
 “ things were made by [or through]  
 “ him ‡.”—And, in divers other places,  
 the worlds, all things, are said to have  
 been created by, or through him. Which  
 passages, to say the least, do not seem  
 easily to admit the sense put upon them  
 by the learned Socinus and his followers;  
 who understand them of the new creation,  
 or the renovation of all things. This, I  
 confess, appears to me to be a forced,  
 very unnatural, and quite inadmissible  
 interpretation of these passages.

But, to prevent your drawing any wrong  
 inferences, on the other hand, from these  
 expressions; let me remind you of two or  
 three passages of scripture, which may

† John xvii, 3.      ‡ John i. 1, 2, &c.

help to explain them. In the epistle to the Ephesians, we find this expression:—  
 “God, who created all things by Jesus  
 “Christ\*.” In that to the Hebrews,  
 the following: “God—hath in these  
 “last days spoken to us by his Son—by  
 “whom also HE made the worlds †.”  
 These passages may help to explain those,  
 in which the worlds, even all things, are  
 spoken of as having been made, or created  
 by, or through Christ the Son of God,  
 without any particular mention of the  
 FATHER.

With respect to the person of our Lord  
 Jesus Christ, it must be farther observed,  
 “That in the fulness of time God sent  
 “forth his Son, made of a woman;”  
 —that “the Word was made flesh;” that  
 “forasmuch as the children were par-  
 “takers of flesh and blood, he also him-  
 “self took part of the same;”—that he

\* Chap. iii. 9.

† Chap. i. 1, 2.

was "found in fashion as a man;"—and is often styled, "the son of man;" and "a man;"—"Jesus, a man approved of God;"—"the man Christ Jesus;"—"that man whom God hath ordained;" &c.

It should, moreover, be very particularly observed, that God, even the FATHER, did, in a very particular and eminent, & transcendently glorious and inexpressible manner, dwell in our Lord Jesus Christ, manifesting his glory in, by and through him. On which account it doubtless is, that he is sometimes called God; and that they who had seen him, are said to have "seen the FATHER;" who yet, strictly speaking, is "the invisible God;" and whose "image," even "the brightness of his glory," and "the express image of his person," hypostasis, substance or essence, Jesus Christ is said to be. As to the particular mode of the divine inhabitation in Christ, it is neither

revealed, nor to be comprehended by mortal men; who cannot even comprehend the manner in which their own spirits dwell in their bodies. But I repeat it, lest I should be misunderstood, that it was "God, even the Father," according to scripture, that dwelt or inhabited in Jesus Christ, in this ineffably glorious manner. For thus he declares of himself, and his marvellous works: "I speak not of myself; but the FATHER THAT DWELLETH IN ME, HE doeth the works \*." But to proceed.

2. The general and grand, both the primary and ultimate end of Christ's coming down from heaven, or of his incarnation, was to glorify his God and Father, by doing his will. "For I am come down from heaven," said he, "not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me †."—"I honour my Father—I seek not mine own glo-

\* John xiv. 10.

† John vi. 38.



“ ry †.”—“ I have not spoken of myself,  
 “ but the Father which sent me, he gave  
 “ me a commandment, what I should say,  
 “ and what I should speak—I speak there-  
 “ fore, even as the Father said unto me,  
 “ so I speak †.”—“ I have glorified thee  
 “ on earth; I have finished the work  
 “ which thou gavest me to do: and now,  
 “ O Father, glorify thou me with thine  
 “ own self ||,” &c. This general end  
 of Christ’s incarnation, comprehends all  
 others. But more particularly,

3. One principal end of Christ’s mani-  
 festation in the flesh, was, to make known  
 the Father; the nature and truth of God,  
 or the principles of true religion, in a more  
 clear, full and perfect manner, than they  
 had been made known before, by Moses  
 or any of the ancient prophets, or even  
 John, that burning and shining light;  
 the greatest of all the prophets, till the

† John viii. 49, 50.  
 xvii. 4, 5.

† Ibid. || Chap.

Son of God himself appeared in that character from heaven.

At the time of our Lord's coming into the world, the Jewish revelation was very grossly corrupted; the priests having long "taught for doctrines the commandments of men;" so that though they were not wholly ignorant of the true God, yet "in vain did they worship him." Among the Gentile nations, there were hardly any traces of true religion to be found. Divine knowledge, the only true wisdom, was far from obtaining among the nations of the world, in proportion as the polite arts and sciences had done. In many countries, particularly Persia, Chaldea, Egypt, Greece and Italy, these arts and sciences had been carried to a surprising degree of perfection. The poet's numbers were harmonious, and his song sublime. The musician almost enchanted wild beasts, and the woods which they haunted, as well as savage men. The

orator thundered and lightened; and, at pleasure, either raised or allayed a storm in the breasts of his auditors. The noblest piles and structures arose under the hands of the architect. The canvass was taught to glow with life, borrowed from the painter's pencil; and brass and marble to breathe under the chisel of the statuary: while the astronomer surveyed and measured the heavens; even those heavens which declare the glory of God. But notwithstanding all these improvements, these wonderful efforts of human genius and industry, "the world by wisdom knew not God!" With respect to the knowledge of Him, and of true religion, there was in fact no material difference betwixt the most refined, and the most savage and barbarous nations under heaven. Witness the multitude of the gods and goddesses acknowledged in them; so great, that it were easier to call all the stars by their names, than to number such a promiscuous rabble—heroes,

strumpets, diseases, plagues, monsters, vices, constellations, beasts, birds, and creeping things ! And if such were the gods, judge you, what the worshippers must have been ; how wise, pure and holy \* !

Such, in brief, was the religious state of the world ; such thick darkness covered its inhabitants, especially the heathen nations, at the time when God thought fit, last of all, to speak unto men by his Son from heaven. He accordingly appeared, saying, “ I am the light of the world ; he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life †.” In which words he tacitly compares himself to the sun in the heavens, that ruleth by day ; enlightening, warming, and diffusing blessings

\* Upwards of thirty thousand pagan deities have been mentioned by writers. Min. Felix alone, may satisfy any person of a moderate curiosity, upon this subject.

† John viii. 12.



on all below: which was indeed agreeable to one of the glorious characters, under which he had been prophesied of—  
“the sun of righteousness arising with  
“healing in his beams.” No man had seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who was in the bosom of the Father, declared him to the world. And as none perfectly knew the Son but the Father; so neither knoweth any man the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son revealeth him. He came to bear witness to the truth; and did it with such clearness, and convincing evidence of his coming from God, that his few disciples might then, with great propriety say, “We know that we are of the truth,  
“and the whole world lieth in wickedness. And we know that the Son of  
“God is come, and hath given us an  
“understanding, that we might know  
“him that is true: and we are in HIM  
“THAT IS TRUE, in HIS Son Jesus

“Christ. **THIS** is the true God, and  
“eternal life\*.”

4. Jesus Christ came into the world, not merely as a light to lighten it with the knowledge of the “only true God;” but to declare his will and commandments authoritatively in his name. “I am come,” saith he, “in my Father’s name,” &c. He came into it as a preacher of righteousness; to inculcate obedience to God’s laws which were already known; to rescue others from the corrupt interpretations, which by time, the ignorance of the people, and more especially the wickedness of the priests, had been put upon them; whereby “the commandment of God was made of none effect.” He came to put an end to the peculiarities of the Jewish dispensation; to “gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad;” to form them

\* 1 John v. 19, 20.

into one spiritual body, or church, under himself as head; that there might be “one fold, and one shepherd.” And he promulgated certain new laws and ordinances relative to this spiritual kingdom, for the due interior regulation of it, and for its support and enlargement, till “all nations should flow into it.”

5. He came to give mankind the most perfect and engaging example of obedience to the will of God; of all piety and righteousness, humility and charity, temperance and patience;—a living example in frail human flesh. For though he were made in the “likeness of sinful flesh;” yet in him was no sin: He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. He said to his disciples upon a certain occasion, “I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.” The like might have been said on other occasions. Indeed, he ad-

monished his disciples in a more general way, to keep his commandments, “that they might abide in his love, even,” saith he, “as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.” And the apostle Peter says of him, that he “left us an example, that we should follow his steps.”

6. He came to make an atonement for the sins of the world; “to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” This he did upon the cross, when he offered himself up to God, as a lamb without blemish and without spot. He is said to have redeemed men to God by his blood; to have died for us, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God. And it should be particularly observed here, that he died thus, not only for a few particular persons, but “died for all,”—“tasted death for every man;” and “gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” Agreeably whereto, the



apostle John speaks of him under the following character—"Jesus Christ the  
 "righteous, who is the propitiation for  
 "our sins, and not for ours only, but  
 "also for the sins of the WHOLE WORLD."

So the apostle Paul speaks of it as the substance of that ministry of reconciliation which he had received, "That God was  
 "in Christ, reconciling the WORLD unto  
 "himself, not imputing their trespasses  
 "unto them." And he accordingly beset-  
 "ches all, in Christ's stead, to be "re-  
 "conciled unto God."

7. He was raised from the dead, and exalted to the highest heavens; not only to "appear in the presence of God" as an intercessor and advocate with him for his disciples; but to be crowned with glory and honour, as being by the Father appointed heir, and Lord, and Judge of all; or as having all power given unto him in heaven and in earth.

## S E R M O N II. III

8. He is to be revealed from heaven at an appointed time ; “ the time of the re-  
 titution of all things, spoken of by all  
 “ the prophets since the world began,”  
 in the glory of the Father, to judge the  
 world in righteousness.—Let me now close  
 these short remarks with the words of the  
 apostle Paul—“ Then cometh the end,  
 “ when he shall have delivered up the  
 “ kingdom to GOD, even the FATHER ;  
 “ when he shall have put down all rule,  
 “ and all authority and power. For he  
 “ must reign till he hath put all enemies  
 “ under his feet. The last enemy that  
 “ shall be destroyed is death. For, HE  
 “ HATH PUT ALL THINGS UNDER HIS  
 “ FEET: But when he saith, all things  
 “ are put under him, it is manifest that  
 “ HE is excepted which did put all  
 “ things under him. And when all  
 “ things shall be subdued unto him, then  
 “ shall the Son also himself be subject  
 “ unto HIM that put all things under

“him, THAT GOD MAY BE ALL IN  
“ALL.”

The several things thus briefly hinted at, I consider only, as some of the more obvious and important ends of Christ's mediation; some of which are spoken of, or referred to, in almost every page of the new testament, as things particularly worthy of our daily meditation. Neither can you be sober-minded, as you ought to be, without believing and often thinking upon these capital doctrines of the gospel. For, as has been before observed, without christian faith, there can be no such thing as christian practice or sobriety, in the old or young.

Let me, therefore, here take occasion, my beloved young brethren, to warn you against the fatal principles of our modern deists. As Jesus Christ has his ministers to exhort you to believe his gospel, and

1 Cor. xv. 24—28.

to be sober-minded, in order to your present and eternal good ; the devil has also his emissaries and apostles to dissuade you from it ; men who, in all countries that are blest with liberty, abuse that liberty by "speaking evil of the things which they understand not : " men who both declaim and write against the gospel of their salvation ; and have even the hardiness to ridicule and blaspheme what angels desire to look into, and consider at once with delight and admiration ;—all those of them, I mean, who " kept their first estate : " for, as to the rest, they doubtless blaspheme these things also ; though they neither disbelieve nor ridicule them ; but " believe and tremble. "—These men, in their talk and writings, commonly pretend great benevolence and good-will. They will profess their sorrow to see you enslaved with superstitious notions and fancies about revelation. They will tell you, perhaps, that you are debarred from the innocent pleasures of life, and held in



a miserable kind of bondage, by the fabled terrors of another world. Whereas, could you cast off these childish prejudices of education, and become One of them, you would enjoy a most delightful ease and freedom of mind, from a full perswasion, either that there is no future state, or at least no hell, where frail creatures are to be tormented for a few fallies and indiscretions: and, that you may depend upon it, if you should survive the shipwreck of death, you shall go to some far happier region—some Elysian field, where you may sport and play to eternity.

These men, however, generally pretend to a great regard for moral virtue; more especially, universal love to mankind: nay, they sometimes even speak respectfully of God.—And, to use the words of the apostle, “No marvel; for  
“Satan himself is transformed into an  
“angel of light. Therefore it is no  
“great thing if his ministers also be trans-

“ formed as the ministers of righteousness;  
 “ whose end shall be according to their  
 “ works \*.” In a word, these are the very  
 men whom the apostle Peter describes,  
 and forewarns you to beware of, in the  
 following words: “ These are wells with-  
 “ out water, clouds that are carried with  
 “ a tempest, to whom the mist of dark-  
 “ ness is reserved for ever. For when  
 “ they speak great swelling words of va-  
 “ nity, they allure through the lusts of  
 “ the flesh, through much wantonness,  
 “ those that were clean escaped from them  
 “ who live in error; while they promise  
 “ them liberty, they themselves are the  
 “ servants of corruption; for of whom a  
 “ man is overcome, of the same is he  
 “ brought in bondage.”

The divine mission and authority of  
 Jesus Christ, or, in other words, the truth  
 of the christian religion, is established by  
 “ many infallible proofs.” However en-

\* 2 Cor. xi. 14, 15.

thusiasts have declaimed against reason, and rational preachers, while themselves were deplorable examples of the contrary, the religion of Christ is a most reasonable religion; the wisdom, as well as the power of God to salvation, to every one that sincerely believes it. Both its doctrines and precepts, as delivered by him and his apostles are rational in the highest sense, however they have been perverted since, bearing a truly divine character, to those that have eyes to see, instead of being blinded by the God of this world. In Jesus Christ were fulfilled many illustrious prophecies. He wrought still more numerous and astonishing miracles, by the finger of that God who dwelt in him. He was also raised from the dead himself, after having raised others, "by the power of the Father." He was often seen and conversed with by many credible witnesses, who had well known him before. He was visibly taken up into heaven: and soon after, in conformity to his own pro-

## S E R M O N II. 117

mise, many miraculous powers were bestowed upon his apostles, and other disciples; particularly the gift of tongues; by means of which, the gospel under the apparent management of a few fishermen, and other poor Galileans, made a surprising progress in opposition to the united wit, malice and power of the world, both Jewish and Gentile. And divers of Christ's and his apostle's predictions have since been fulfilled, and others of them are daily fulfilling.

The plain consequence of these facts, is, That Jesus Christ was, indeed, the Son of God; and that the religion which bears his sacred name, is the true religion, which, in all reason, you are bound to receive with the profoundest reverence and gratitude. Let me therefore just remind you further here, of the words of Peter in his own, and the name of the other apostles, upon a particular occasion. When many of our Lord's disci-



ples forsook him, in the days of his flesh, and walked no more with him, he turned and said, in an affectionate manner, "Will ye also go away?"—At once intimating his unwillingness that they should do so, and his determination to leave them to their own choice and liberty. Hereupon Peter made the following answer, in which you, my young brethren, must be left to join with him or not, as God shall give you light—"Lord, \* to whom shall we go! Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe, and are sure, that thou art that Christ, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD."

\* John vi. 68, 69.

Dr. LELAND's excellent Review of the Deistical Writers, deserves to be read by every young man who has leisure for reading.

SERMON III.  
OF  
SOBRIETY  
IN  
PRINCIPLE  
AND  
PRACTICE,  
AS INCLUDING  
Sober Thoughts of Ourselves,  
AND  
EVANGELICAL REPENTANCE.

S E R M O N III

S E R M O N III

TITUS II

Forasmuch as we have seen that to be sober-minded

HAVING then that sobriety of mind (supposed) (I) A desire

God's being and perfection; and (2) Of the christian revelation; let me observe

III That it also implies, thinking of ourselves, as members of a most important ingredient in christian sobriety; and it comprehends divers particulars, which shall be mentioned all convenient brevity. And

1. This implies a sense of your own ignorance, or the native darkness

## S E R M O N III.

TITUS ii. 6.

*Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded,*

**H**AVING shewn that sobriety of mind supposes, (1.) A belief of God's being and perfections; and, (2.) Of the christian revelation; let me now observe,

III. That it also implies, thinking soberly of yourselves. This is an essential, a most important ingredient in christian sobriety; and it comprehends divers particulars, which shall be mentioned with all convenient brevity. And,

1. This implies a sense of your natural ignorance, or the native darkness of



your understandings. You may conclude that I do not here intend any thing here that is peculiar to you; but speak with reference to what is common to you with others. All men in general are born into the world, absolutely ignorant of every thing; they know nothing of what is passing in this world or any other. Whatever any know, it is not innate, or born with them; but acquired afterwards. And so feeble are their intellectual faculties, that however ambitious they are of knowing, or being thought to know a great deal, what they can actually attain to, is comparatively but very little, even though they spend much time in the pursuit of knowledge. They are as it were doomed to ignorance by the very condition of their birth, nature and life in this world, notwithstanding either their thirst after, or affectation of wisdom. This is the sentiment which is expressed by Zophar in the book of Job: "Canst thou  
" by searching find out God? Canst thou

“ find out the Almighty unto perfection ?  
 “ It is as high as heaven ; what canst  
 “ thou do ? Deeper than hell ; what  
 “ canst thou know ?—He knoweth vain  
 “ men—For vain man would be wise,  
 “ though man be born like a wild ass’s  
 “ colt \*.” Young men especially, are  
 generally prone to entertain too high a  
 conceit of their knowledge, and of their  
 capacity for knowing more : which of-  
 ten makes them over positive in their  
 own way, and self-sufficient. It leads  
 them to despise the opinions and counsels  
 of others ; of their parents, and other  
 persons, though older, and, most pro-  
 bably, wiser than themselves. This is of  
 pernicious consequence in many respects.  
 If, therefore, you would be sober-minded,  
 think soberly of, and know yourselves :  
 it becomes you to be modest, and self-  
 diffident ; not to lean too much to your  
 own understandings ; but, from a con-  
 sciousness of your inexperience, to listen

to advice, and endeavour to learn of others; though by no means to resign up your own understandings implicitly to the dictates of any; and, least of all, in matters of conscience and religion, which are peculiarly your own concern. Indeed, you might well suspect the probity of any man's design, whatever were his character, who should persuade you to put out, or to blind your own eyes in a thick wood; promising, that when you had done so, he would be your faithful guide out of it; —especially if you had money about you. Whoever act such a part as this by others in their spiritual concerns, they do not so well deserve the name of ministers of the gospel, as that of thieves, robbers and assassins.

2. Thinking soberly of yourselves, implies a due consideration of your moral frailty and depravity: whereby (as in what was last mentioned, your natural ignorance) nothing is intended that is

peculiar to yourselves, but what is common to the offspring of Adam. There is a great deal of perverseness and vice, which may be considered as in some sense natural to mankind; arising from ignorance, or weakness of understanding on the one hand, and from strong passions on the other. Both these are certainly natural to mankind. And what is the natural, not to say, unavoidable consequence of such a union, or concurrence of ignorance and passion in the same subject, but irregularity of desire, will and behaviour, in many respects. But how does the case stand in fact? Do not all go astray, at least in some degree, from the paths of reason and virtue, very early in life? So early, that it occasioned the Psalmist to say, not indeed without a figure, that they are "estranged from the womb; and go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies." This, to be sure, is not literally true; nor was it designed to be so



understood. The meaning is, that the ignorance and passions of children are such, that they speak and act unreasonably, and deviate from the rules of virtue, in a greater or less degree, almost as soon as they are capable of speaking and acting at all. And the wiser son of David has said, to the same purpose, that "childhood and youth are vanity;" and that "folly is bound up in the heart of a child." By which he doubtless means something that is in a degree vicious; not simple, unavoidable ignorance only: for he adds, that the "rod of correction will drive it far from him;" which could not be said with propriety, of mere natural and unavoidable ignorance. It is not my design to suggest, that either you, or any others, were really and properly vicious, and criminal, before you were capable in any measure of distinguishing betwixt good and evil. But were you not sinful creatures, in a degree, as soon as you began to act viciously? Was not

that very early in life? And is not this at least, just matter of humiliation to you, and to all? If you are sober-minded; if you think soberly of yourselves, even as you ought to think, the most harmless and innocent of you will not be pure in your own eyes; but acknowledge that you are unclean; having been guilty of numberless irregular desires, and faults: of many vicious actions, from your childhood, since you were actually capable of discerning betwixt good and evil. So that if God were strict to mark iniquity, even the most innocent of you could not stand in judgment. What then would be the consequence, as to the most criminal!

3. This leads me to observe, that thinking soberly of yourselves, implies the serious consideration of your state as you are morally polluted creatures, guilty before God, and standing in need both of purification, and forgiveness. That darkness of the human mind, that irregularity of

the will, and disorder of the affections, which may justly be termed natural, in the sense before explained, are certainly infelicities at least, from which all, for their own sakes, should desire deliverance; that instead of them, there may be knowledge in the mind, regularity in the will, and a due subordination of the passions and affections to right reason. Herein summarily consists that moral purity which was just now hinted at; and which stands in opposition to the natural blindness and depravation of the mind. But you ought to consider yourselves, not merely as carrying about with you a mental disease, which needs a remedy; but also as culpable and criminal in the sight of God, on account of your actual deviations from the rule of your duty, so far as you have really departed from it, in thought, word or deed; and therefore, as was said before, standing in need of forgiveness also. An holy God, though he may pity, and shew mercy to, yet must needs be displeased

with; those who knowingly violate his commandments, or the laws of reason and virtue; as you have all doubtless done in many instances. If God had been rigorously just, or destitute of mercy, you might have been cast off by him even in childhood, for your sins committed in that state. Your transgressions have still been growing more numerous, and, probably more aggravated with your years: so that it is not owing to your own innocence, but to the Lord's mercy, that you are not consumed. And, in order to being sober-minded, you are to think thus soberly of yourselves and your state, with reference to God and his laws; for this is no more than what you ought to think, it being only truth and fact; and such truth, the serious consideration of which, has a very close connection with christian sobriety of mind; or rather, is comprised in it.

4. This implies a serious consideration of your natural frailty, or mortali-



ty; of the many evils to which you are liable in this world; of the shortness and uncertainty of human life, and the certainty of death approaching. Many people, and particularly the young, are apt to entertain fond, romantic conceits about worldly felicity, and to put far away the evil day of death, of adversity and sorrow; seldom, perhaps, thinking of it at all, and when they do, generally flattering themselves that this day is at a great distance. But if ever you are truly sober-minded, you will think differently upon this subject. You will see the vanity of the world and its enjoyments; even of all that is in the world, “the lust of the eye, “the lust of the flesh, and the pride of “life.” You will often have in your thoughts, the bodily pains and diseases, the numerous crosses and disappointments, and the many other natural evils, to which mankind are subjected in the present state, agreeably to the representations of scripture, and to the experience of all ages—

That the creature, that mankind are made  
 "subject unto vanity." You will not  
 therefore, if you think soberly of your-  
 selves, and the present state, depend upon  
 any great, uninterrupted and lasting felicity  
 in this "evil world;" or even upon  
 living long in it. For there are hardly  
 any more obvious truths than these: that  
 "man that is born of a woman, is of few  
 "days and full of trouble: he cometh  
 "forth as a flower, and is cut down; he  
 "fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth  
 "not." How frequent are the examples  
 of mortality, even in the young; in the  
 robust and strong, who had the fairest  
 prospect of any, of long life? How often  
 have you yourselves seen the words of Job  
 verified?—That "one dieth in his full  
 "strength, being wholly at ease and  
 "quiet. His breasts are full of milk,  
 "and his bones are moistened with mar-  
 "row." It is not of so great importance  
 for you to know particularly, how mankind  
 originally came into such a state as has

been mentioned, as it is to know, and duly to consider, the certainty of it as a fact. It may therefore suffice here to observe to you in general, that the holy scriptures speak of this as having been occasioned by the sin of our first parents, or their apostacy from God.—But just sentiments concerning human life, mortality and death, considered as facts, are doubtless a very material branch of that sobriety, to which young men should be exhorted.

5. A serious consideration of the consequences of death, belongs also to this head. These consequences are most important and interesting in their nature, according to the holy scriptures; which represent this short life as a state of trial or probation, and that which follows it, as a state of recompence; which is therefore to be either a most happy or miserable one to all men respectively, according to the deeds done by them “in the body.” Though your bodies are mortal, your souls will survive

them: "It is appointed unto all men once to die, and after that the judgment." Now you will not, certainly, deserve the character of sober-minded, unless you often think seriously of these things;—approaching death, the immortality of your souls, the righteous judgment of God, and the unfading, eternal joys, or the unutterable woes, which will be the consequence of that decisive judgment.

Before I pass on to the other things necessary for the illustration of christian sobriety;

I would my young brethren, here caution you against pride, vanity and self-sufficiency; than which there is nothing more repugnant to true sobriety. Consider yourselves at all times as the degenerate offspring of Adam. Consider the narrowness, weakness, and great imperfection of your intellectual faculties; how naturally dark your minds are, as you



come into the world; how little you really know at present, how much you are wholly ignorant of, and will be, should you live ever so long. Consider the moral depravation of your minds; your proneness to vice; the many sins and follies which you have been guilty of, from your early childhood; how justly you might be condemned by HIM, that is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; who chargeth even his angels with folly, and in whose sight the heavens are not clean. Consider the need which you have, both of cleansing from the filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and of pardon, through the blood of Jesus Christ. If you entertain such sentiments as these; if you think thus soberly of yourselves, it will be a good step towards that sobriety of mind to which you are exhorted. But there will be but little ground of hope respecting you if you are vain and proud; if you are puffed up with an high opinion of yourselves, of your own knowledge, inhos-

cence and virtue, or your righteousness in the sight of God—In saying these things, you doubtless perceive on one hand, that I do not mean to flatter you in any evil or false way. You may be equally assured on the other hand, that I do not mean to reproach and revile you; but only to represent the plain truth to you, that you may now acquaint yourselves with God, and be at peace; so that good may come unto you in the end.

Let me also, in conformity to what has been said before, caution you against those fond and groundless conceits about worldly happiness, particularly in the gratification of your sensual lusts and passions, which the minds of the young are so commonly filled with; while they neglect that pious and virtuous practice, in which alone true felicity is to be found. Such imaginations as those, are mere dreams; or the delusions of him that is said to be a liar and murderer from the beginning,

on account of his tempting our first parents with the fair forbidden fruit ; telling them that they should not surely die by eating of it, but become happy and immortal as gods. The like delusions he practises from age to age with success, upon the unexperienced sons of Adam and Eve ; so that they also flatter themselves with the hopes of happiness, by eating “ forbidden fruit ;” and in doing those things, of which God hath said, that the end of them is death. It would be your wisdom to take warning by the fate of our common progenitors : and also to trust the experience of those in all ages, who having made the trial, have found that vicious pleasures are but pain in the end ; particularly the experience of that great KING, and PREACHER \* to young men, who, after so much trial, said : “ vanity of vanities, all is vanity.” — “ I have seen all the works that are done under the sun, and behold all is vanity and

SOLOMON.

“vexation of spirit.” Hear then, my beloved brethren, what the same wise, great and royal PREACHER calls “the conclusion of the whole matter;”—the result of all his observations, inquiries, reflections and experience—“Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.”

IV. This sobriety supposes and implies in it, SINCERE REPENTANCE; such a repentance as the Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles preached to the world. I mentioned to you, thinking soberly of yourselves, as a necessary ingredient in true sobriety of mind: and which implies a serious consideration of the darkness and depravity of mind which are common to you with the rest of mankind. It also implies a consideration of your past sins and miscarriages; and of the state of guilt which you



are in, in consequence of having transgressed God's commandments. But something beyond this, is implied in repentance. Let me, therefore, shew, as briefly as may be, what the holy scriptures intend hereby. And, some persons have

In general, repentance properly signifies a change of sentiment, of mind and disposition, in consequence of reflection; an after-wisdom in one that has been in error and vice; and, in one word, the conversion, i. e. the turning of his heart from sin and folly to righteousness and wisdom, — from the power of satan unto God. This, in general, is the true scriptural idea of repentance; as it is indeed explained by these scripture expressions, “repentance from dead works,” and “repentance towards God.” But, more particularly, Repentance implies a sense of having erred from the paths of truth and virtue;

## S E R M O N III. 147

or a conviction of the mind and conscience, that a person has done amiss; that he has done what he ought not to have done, and neglected those things which he was in reason bound to do. Some persons have indeed been much more criminal than others; their deviations from their duty have been more numerous, and their faults of a more heinous nature. But all are in some degree culpable. And no person ever did or can repent, without being first convinced of his errors.

Repentance implies, not only a sense of having done amiss, but of having therein transgressed God's commandments, which are holy, just and good; or, in other words, of having sinned against God. Even an atheist, continuing such, may be convinced of his having transgressed the laws of right reason, and of justice; but he cannot repent, which implies a conviction of the mind that

one has sinned against God, or transgressed his laws, considered as such: "For  
 "sin is the transgression of the law" of  
 God.

3. Repentance implies shame, and remorse of conscience. And this is, indeed, very closely connected with a conviction of mind, that one has violated the commandments of the all-wise, holy and good God. The penitent sinner finds himself pierced and wounded at the heart; or, in the language of scripture, "pricked  
 "in the heart," as with a poisoned arrow, or a deadly dart.

4. It implies self-condemnation, a sense of ill desert, an apprehension of God's righteous displeasure, and fear of "the  
 "wrath to come." However easy or secure the sinner were before, yet when the holy law of God, and his own sins are at once brought into his view, the very sight is as it were mortal to him. This is the

two-fold state, or rather, these are the successive states of mind, which the apostle Paul represents in the emphatical words following: "I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."

5. Though repentance implies remorse of conscience, and self-condemnation, it is essentially different from despair. True repentance is ever attended with a degree of hope towards God; despair implies a fear of wrath void of hope, which is the state of devils. That carries the soul to God, as a merciful and gracious being, who delighteth not in the death of sinners: this drives it from him, and plunges the sinner into a state of greater guilt and misery than he was in before. The despairing sinner has, if I may so express it, both his eyes fixed on the holy law, or justice of God: the true penitent, but one of his; the other being turned on God's mercy, or grace, manifested in the go-



Spok. So that repentance and faith, though often treated of distinctly, and though really distinct in some respects, naturally infer and imply each other, when we speak of that repentance and faith which are truly evangelical.

6. True repentance implies an ingenuous sorrow for, and hatred of all sin in general, as it is most unreasonable in itself, and contrary to the holy nature of God; not merely as it exposes the sinner to his wrath and curse.

7. It is, accordingly, attended with a sincere and fixed resolution, by God's grace and help, to forsake all the known ways of vice and folly without exception. If I may so express it, repentance cuts "off the right-hand," and "plucks out the right-eye;" it severs betwixt the heart and every former lust, how beloved soever; or however sovereign an empire it once maintained over the blinded and enslaved soul.

9. The sincere penitent is resolved, not only that he will "cease to do evil," but by God's grace, "learn to do well;" and live in obedience to all his commandments.

It should be farther observed,

10. That such a repentance as this, which is the gift of God by the ministry of the gospel, under the conduct and influence of his Holy Spirit, constitutes that renewed state of mind, which the scriptures express by a "new heart," being "born again," the "new creature," the "new man," and the like.

Now true repentance is absolutely necessary in order to true sobriety of mind. Our Lord Jesus Christ preached the necessity of it himself, saying, "Except ye repent, ye shall all perish." He commanded his apostles to do the same throughout the world, with this addition, that the remission of sins should be proclaimed at

the same time in his name. This he did, in the most explicit manner, after his resurrection; as in the following words: “ Thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and “ to rise again the third day: and that “ repentance and remission of sins should “ be preached in his name, among all “ nations—And ye are witnesses of these “ things. And behold I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry “ ye—until ye be endued with power “ from on high \*.” The apostles punctually followed his directions in this, as in other respects. For immediately after they had received “ the promise of the “ Father”—the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven in conformity to his promise, on the day of pentecost, we find them preaching thus: “ Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of “ Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins †.” And again soon after, to the same purpose, thus: “ Repent ye therefore, and

\* Luke xxiv. 46—49. † Acts ii. 38.

“ be converted, that your sins may be  
 “ blotted out \*.”—They did the like  
 wherever they preached, whether to Jews  
 or Gentiles. And accordingly the apostle  
 Paul, giving an account of his own doc-  
 trine, does it in this comprehensive man-  
 ner: “ Testifying both to the Jews,”  
 saith he, “ and also to the Greeks, re-  
 “ pentance toward God, and faith to-  
 “ ward our Lord Jesus Christ †.”

Certainly then, you cannot imagine  
 yourselves sober-minded, without that  
 repentance which Jesus Christ and his  
 apostles taught thus, as a grand, funda-  
 mental part of the religion of sinful crea-  
 tures. Be assured that, whatever you may  
 believe concerning God and his Son Je-  
 sus Christ, concerning the common de-  
 generacy of mankind, or any other mat-  
 ter, you will yet be the subjects of no so-  
 briety deserving the name of christian,  
 without godly sorrow for your own sins

\* Chap. iii. 19.

† Chap. xx. 21.



respectively, and a deep repentance; such an one, in general, as hath been briefly described; and particularly such an one, the consequence of forsaking of every known wicked practice. If you have no other sobriety of mind, than what will consist with an habitual indulgence of your lusts, this is a strange sort of sobriety indeed; such as neither the scriptures, nor common sense, knows any thing of. What a solecism would it be, to speak of a sober-minded young man, still “walking in the way of his heart, and “in the sight of his eyes;” and resolved in those wicked courses, for which God has positively declared, he “will bring “him into judgment?” You would not, surely, think it any commendation of you, to be characterised as sober young men, and then to have your sobriety explained after this manner: you would immediately and justly conclude, that you were reproached in the bitter language of sarcasm and irony—And God grant, there

may be very few SUCH sober-minded young men amongst us! Imagine not therefore, you have any sobriety that is worthy the name, till you have repented of all your sins in dust and ashes; till you find in yourselves a fixed resolution to forsake them; till you implore the forgiveness of them with truly broken and contrite hearts; till you cast yourselves on the grace of God as manifested through Jesus Christ, saying in the humble spirit of the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" Nor, in a word, till you internally and truly consent to that method of salvation which the gospel reveals. Every thing short of this, SIRS, will leave you destitute of christian sobriety.

THE NEW YORK

OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

IN SENATE

AND ASSEMBLY

FOR THE YEAR 1891

THE SENATE

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FOR THE YEAR 1891

S E R M O N I V.

OF  
S O B R I E T Y,

As including that

F A I T H

Which is JUSTIFYING and SAVING;

A N D

FREQUENT and FERVENT PRAYER.



S E R M O N IV.

TITUS II. IV.  
S E R M O N IV.

It was not his own's choice to be sober-minded.

O 7

THE first part of my design, was

to explain to you, my young brethren, the nature of  
that sobriety looked on in the text, and

to recommend it to you.

In prosecution of which, divers remarks  
have already been made on the nature of  
sobriety, considered both internally and  
externally, and more particularly the four  
following:

I. That it is founded in a firm belief  
of God's being and perfections, his moral  
government and universal providence.

## S E R M O N IV.

TITUS ii. 6.

*Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded.*

THE first part of my design, was somewhat distinctly to explain to you, my young brethren, the nature of that sobriety spoken of in the text, and to recommend it to you.

In prosecution of which, divers remarks have already been made on the nature of sobriety, considered both internally and externally, and more particularly the four following:

I. That it is founded in a firm belief of God's being and perfections, his moral government and universal providence.

II. That it implies a belief of the gospel of Christ, or the christian revelation.

III. That it also implies thinking soberly of ourselves. And,

IV. It supposes and implies in it, sincere repentance; such a repentance as the Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles preached to the world.

Every thing short of these, will leave you destitute of christian sobriety; but this leads me to speak a little more distinctly than I have hitherto done, of that faith which the scriptures speak of as having the remission of sins, justification and eternal life connected with it. Which faith, though it includes, yet certainly intends much more than, what is usually called a speculative belief of the christian revelation; the necessity of which hath been already spoken of and proved.

To proceed therefore,

V. Christian sobriety of mind, implies in it that faith, which is often spoken of in scripture as justifying and saving. Let me explain this matter to you under the following observations: for a thing of so great importance ought not to be passed over with a cursory mention of it.

I. Sinful men, as such, need a mediator between God and them; a redeemer and saviour from sin and death. God is, indeed, perfect in goodness and mercy, even essentially, or in his own nature. But according to the representations of scripture, it was not consistent with his wisdom and majesty, or the dignity of his laws, and the honour of his government; (the due support of which, by the way, is actually for the good and happiness of the intelligent creation in general;) it was not consistent herewith, I say, for God to overlook, or to forgive the transgressions of men, without the intervention of a mediator; who should do



and suffer what might have a tendency, and be sufficient to vindicate the honour of his laws, by exciting and preserving in all, a just veneration for his government, at the same time that guilty creatures were made partakers of his lenity and grace.

2. The Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the one and only person, who sustains this character of a mediator betwixt God and sinners. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time \*." He is the "propitiation for the sins of the whole world;" having died for all, "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." — "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved †."

\* 1 Tim. ii. 5. 6. † Acts iv. 12.

3. The Lord Jesus Christ was appointed and ordained to this office by God our Father, from the original clemency and goodness of his nature; by him to manifest the riches of his grace to those that were obnoxious to his righteous displeasure, or in a state of sin, condemnation and death.

“ For God so loved the world, that he  
 “ gave his only begotten Son, that who-  
 “ soever believeth on him, should not  
 “ perish, but have everlasting life. For  
 “ God sent not his Son into the world  
 “ to condemn the world, but that the  
 “ world through him might be saved \*.”

And, “ In this was manifested the love  
 “ of God towards us, because that God  
 “ sent his only begotten Son into the  
 “ world, that we might live through  
 “ him. Herein is love, not that we loved  
 “ God, but that he loved us, and sent  
 “ his Son to be the propitiation for our  
 “ sins †.” The mediation of Christ,  
 therefore, is the effect, the consequence

\* John iii. 16, 17.

† 1 John iv. 9, 10.

of God's love and grace to sinful men; not the cause or ground of it, as it has often been represented, not a little to the dishonour of God's goodness, and of his free, rich grace to the children of men.

4. God himself having appointed his Son to the mediatorial office, there can be no doubt but that he is in all respects duly qualified for it: and "able to save them unto the uttermost, that come unto God by him." To which end, "it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell."

5. The holy scriptures frequently speak of the Lord Jesus Christ, as sustaining a threefold character, or relation to mankind; and as executing three high and important offices in the capacity of a mediator between God and men. He was "a prophet mighty in deed and word," "before God and all the people." He is the high-priest, the "great high-priest"

“of our profession!” and he reigns as a king; God having “given him all power in heaven and in earth,” or “put all things under his feet, and [particularly] given him to be head over all things to the church \*.”

6. The revealed method of obtaining the forgiveness of sins, deliverance from wrath, and a title to eternal life, through Jesus Christ, is most usually expressed in the New Testament by the terms “faith,” “believing” on him, “receiving him,” and “coming to him.”—“That whosoever BELIEVETH on him, should not perish,” &c.—“Ye are all the children of God by FAITH in Christ Jesus.”—“As many as RECEIVED him, to them gave he power” [the high and glorious privilege] “to become the sons of God, even to them that BELIEVE in his name.”—“Ye will not COME UNTO ME, that ye might

Eph. 1. 22.



“have life.” — “COME UNTO ME all ye  
 “that labour, and are heavy laden, and  
 “I will give you rest.” These various  
 expressions are undoubtedly synonymous,  
 or signify in general the same thing.

7. These expressions being compared  
 with other passages of scripture, and the  
 whole tenor of the New Testament, can  
 intend nothing short of a sincere acquies-  
 cence in, or assent and consent of the heart to,  
 that method of salvation which is reveal-  
 ed through Christ: for it is “with the  
 “heart that man believeth unto righte-  
 “ousness.” So that the faith which in  
 scripture is said to justify and save, might  
 be defined in the following manner, con-  
 formably to the foregoing remarks; viz,  
 FAITH is the act of a self-condemned, hum-  
 bled and repenting sinner, flying to, and  
 casting himself upon the free grace of God  
 in Jesus Christ; whom he trusts with the  
 concerns of his soul, as the only, and  
 every way sufficient Saviour of sinners,

# SERMON IV. 161

provided and appointed by the Father; internally receiving and submitting to him in the whole of that character, as he is revealed in the gospel, viz. as a prophet, priest and king: which faith implies in it the new birth, or the renovation of the heart, and is a living, operative principle of love and obedience; never failing, when there is time and opportunity for it, to produce good works, or a virtuous, holy and godly life.—Let me distinctly, though briefly, explain the several parts of this definition.

That faith which has forgiveness, justification and salvation connected with it, is, an “act;” the act of the soul, or mind. In which respect it agrees with believing, assenting, or consenting, in any other case whatever: all which are real acts or operations of the mind. Our Saviour himself calls believing a “work,” in answer to that question, “What shall we do, that we might work the works

“of God?” — “This is the work of God,”  
 said he, “THAT (YE) BELIEVE on him,  
 whom he hath sent \*” Moreover,

It is the act of “a self-condemned,  
 “humbled and repenting sinner.” None  
 but such an one can, in the nature of the  
 thing, truly believe in Christ as the savi-  
 our of sinners, or have any desire, how  
 much need soever he may have, to be sa-  
 ved by him. It is, accordingly, those  
 that “labour and are heavy laden” with  
 a sense of sin, that Christ invites to come  
 unto him, or believe on him, saying —  
 “And I will give you rest.” Again,

It is the act of such a sinner, “flying to,  
 “and casting himself upon the free grace of  
 “God.” It is implied in his being “self-  
 “condemned,” &c. that he trusts not in  
 himself, or in any innocence or righte-  
 ousness of his own: so that all his hopes  
 must necessarily terminate at last, on the

mere grace and mercy of God. And faith is that act of the soul, by which it has recourse to this mercy, or humbly depends upon the God of all grace, for pardon and salvation. But

It is on the mercy, or free grace of God in Jesus Christ, that the repenting sinner thus casts himself by faith. However certain it may be upon principles of reason only, that God is a good and merciful being; yet the true believer trusts in his mercy, as it is revealed and manifested through Christ; "coming unto God by him".

Again: he casts himself on the grace of God in Christ, whom he also "trusts with the concerns of his soul." Faith implies a sinner's relying or depending upon the Lord Jesus Christ as a Redeemer and Saviour. And that, in the next place,



As the “only, and every-way sufficient Saviour of sinners.” The true, penitent believer does not doubt of Christ’s being in all respects a suitable and adequate Saviour of sinful men: (for to do so, is the essence of infidelity.) And as the only one, in conformity to the apostle’s words, “Neither is there salvation in any other.” Moreover,

He trusts in him thus, as the Saviour “provided and appointed by the FATHER.” This is implied in what was said before; and so needs not to be insisted on. Only it should always be remembered, that Christ does every thing in the affair of man’s salvation, in conformity to the sovereign and gracious pleasure of God, even the Father—“Who gave himself for our sins,” says the apostle—“according to the will of God and our Father.”

Gal. i. 4.

The penitent believer in Christ as a Saviour, does at the same time, and thereby, “internally receive and submit to him in the whole of that character, as he is revealed in the gospel.” Christ, as a Saviour, is not divided, nor are his offices or benefits divided. Neither does christian or saving faith respect him, considered in one of his capacities exclusively of the other; but in all of them in conjunction; as the one undivided mediator, in conformity to the doctrine of the gospel; viz

“As a prophet, priest and king.” Now, internally to receive and submit to him as a “prophet,” is to consider and regard him as such; to give intire credit to whatsoever he has said, so far as it is known; sincerely to desire to “learn of him,” and to be instructed by him in the things which pertain to the kingdom of God. As faith respects him in his “priestly” office, it means depending

upon the mercy of God for pardon and salvation through his sacrifice, atonement, or blood shed upon the cross, and intercession with the Father in consequence thereof. And faith, as it respects him in his regal or "kingly" character, means subjection, or dutiful and loyal submission of heart to him, his authority and government; or a sincere consent of the mind to be ruled and governed, as well as protected, and finally saved by him. Nor did ever any person PROPERLY receive and submit to the Lord Jesus Christ, or believe on him, in any one of these characters, (such is their connection) without doing so with respect to them all. Again,

Such a faith as this, implies or hath connected with it "the new birth," that "renovation of the heart," by the Spirit of God, so often spoken of in scripture. This is evident from a consideration thereof, as it has now been briefly explained.

# SERMON IV. 167

And the same thing is also expressed or implied, in the faith spoken of in scripture as saving—"To them gave he power," says St. John, "to become the sons of God, even to them that BELIEVE on his name: which were BORN, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, BUT OF GOD\*."—"Whosoever BELIEVETH that Jesus is the Christ" [truly and properly BELIEVETH it] "is BORN OF GOD†."—"Ye are all the CHILDREN of GOD BY FAITH in Christ Jesus‡."—"And if children, then heirs§," &c.

This faith of consequence, as was said before, is "a living," operative principle of love and obedience; never failing where there is time and opportunity for it, to produce good works, or a virtuous, holy and godly life. For, "Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin§."

\* John i. 12, 13. † John v. 1. ‡ Gal. iii. 16. § Rom. viii. 17. § 1 John iii. 9.



But—"overcometh the world; and this  
 "is the victory that overcometh the world  
 "even our faith \*."—"In Christ Jesus  
 "neither circumcision availeth any thing,  
 "nor uncircumcision; but FAITH that  
 "WORKETH BY LOVE †."—"Wilt thou  
 "know, O vain man, that faith with-  
 "out works is dead?"—"By works was  
 "faith made perfect ‖." It must be par-  
 ticularly observed, however, that a sin-  
 ner is no sooner the subject of such a faith  
 than he is actually in a state of pardon,  
 justification and salvation, whether he  
 lives afterwards to perform good works,  
 or not. If he lives, he certainly will per-  
 form them, having such an holy and ope-  
 rative principle in his heart. For it is a  
 contradiction to suppose, that a person  
 who was once a rebel, should at length  
 internally submit himself to Jesus Christ  
 as his king, and yet not act as becomes a

\* Chap. v. 4. † Gal. v. 6. ‖ James  
 ii. 22.

loyal subject of his kingdom, by doing his commandments. But if he has no opportunity for this, by reason of death, he is yet equally safe, equally justified: his faith, the loyalty and obedience of his heart, virtually contain all good works. And, by the way, from this scriptural account of the faith which justifies and saves, appears the great error of those, who speak of justification as antecedent to repentance, faith and regeneration; it being manifestly subsequent, or posterior thereto, in order and conception, according to the scriptures.

But let it be observed, that in whatever breast this faith resides, there will be spiritual desires and affections, and a constant communion with God, which leads me to remark,

VI. That christian sobriety implies frequent and fervent PRAYER to almighty God, in the name of Christ, for the par-

don of sin, for the Holy Spirit, for light, support, sanctification, comfort; in a word, for all needed blessings, temporal and eternal: together with devout and grateful praises for all blessings enjoyed of every kind, to the Father of lights, from whom "every good gift, and every perfect gift cometh down." An habitual neglect of prayer, is absolutely inconsistent with the spirit of christianity. And if ever you are really sober-minded, you will find in yourselves an heart, a disposition to pray, and to give thanks to "God and our Father for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." It will not be a grievous task or burden to you, as it is to a secure and hardened sinner. So far from this, that you will find yourselves uneasy if you are long without pouring out your hearts before God. You will not only pray to him in public with his people, and in a more private manner, if you have opportunity, but in secret. And even when you are engaged in the lawful

and necessary business of life, your hearts will frequently be lifted up to God in the heavens, in holy desires, grateful praises, and good resolutions: thus, in the language of the apostle, “praying always with all prayer, and supplication in the Spirit, watching thereunto with perseverance\*.”

Such, my young brethren, is that faith, so much spoken of in the New Testament; that faith which is truly justifying and saving; and without which there is no salvation. For he that doth not believe thus, or in the true sense of scripture, is “condemned already.” No kind or degree of repentance or reformation, entitles any person to salvation, independently of faith: it is by means of this faith, which indeed includes or supposes repentance, that sinners are delivered from condemnation and wrath. This, therefore, is indispensably necessary, in order to your being sober-

\* Eph. vi. 18.



minded in a christian sense. Whoever falls short of this, falls short of christian sobriety. For surely, THAT cannot be a truly christian sobriety of mind, which leaves a sinner in a state of guilt and condemnation. Any sobriety which a person may be the subject of, and yet perish in his sins at last, as a despiser or neglecter of the salvation revealed through Christ, is essentially defective.

To conclude. Whatever concern you may have upon your minds about your past sins; though your external practice may be much reformed; and though you may be really desirous of eternal happiness (as who is not?) yet if you do not give the consent of your hearts to be saved by Jesus Christ, in the way that the gospel makes known; if you do not sincerely, penitently and humbly cast yourselves on the mercy of God, receiving and submitting to Christ as a prophet, priest and king; if you do not keep up a frequent

intercourse with heaven; and continue instant in prayer, you are not sober-minded in the full and just sense of the text: you are not yet actually in the spiritual kingdom of Christ and of God, though you may not be far from, but near to it, and in a hopeful way of finally inheriting the blessings of it. This is not, however, a state to be rested in as safe or secure. If you are burdened with a sense of sin and guilt, and fear the wrath to come, remember the gracious words, and hearken to the invitation of Him, who once said, and still saith, "Come unto me—and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me—and ye shall find rest unto your souls\*:" that is, in other words, Become my true disciples and followers: believe in me, and submit yourselves to the laws of my kingdom: doing which, you will enjoy great peace of mind at present, and inherit everlasting life.

\* Matt. xi. 28, 29.

SERMON W.

...with heaven, and ...  
...and ...

SERMON V.

CHRISTIAN SOBRIETY

FURTHER EXPLAINED

As including in

EXTERNAL PROFESSION

OF  
CHRISTIANITY

AND  
UNIVERSAL OBEDIENCE

TO  
CHRIST'S COMMANDMENTS

S E R M O N V.

CHRISTIAN SOBRIETY

FURTHER EXPLAINED,

As including an

EXTERNAL PROFESSION

O F

C H R I S T I A N I T Y,

A N D

U N I V E R S A L O B E D I E N C E

T O

C H R I S T ' S C O M M A N D M E N T S.



S E R M O N

S E R M O N  
TITUS 2

CHRISTIAN SOBRIETY  
FURTHER EXPLAINED

Y O U will observe my young  
men, that the last of your  
duties, not to your external  
but to that FAITH which is truly  
and which is the foundation of  
christian sobriety internally considered  
the root and principle of all the  
or christian obedience. Of which  
the soul up to God, and engages it to  
center in him. The person possessed of  
CHRISTIAN COMMANDMENT  
saving faith, cannot live without daily  
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PRAYER to God in the name of Christ

## S E R M O N V.

TITUS ii. 6.

*Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded.*

**Y**OU will observe, my young brethren, the last discourse related immediately, not to your external practice, but to that FAITH which is truly saving, and is itself the substance or essence of christian sobriety internally considered; the root and principle of all true holiness, or christian obedience. It naturally leads the soul up to God, and engages it to center in him. The person possessed of saving faith, cannot live without daily communion with God; which led me to observe, that the sobriety exhorted to in the text, included frequent and fervent PRAYER to God in the name of Christ;

there can be no sobriety, nor genuine faith without prayer, both in secret and in public; faith will engage the soul to live with, and to live unto God: which brings me to observe in the next place, that christian sobriety implies in it,

**LVII. AN EXTERNAL CONFESSION** of Christ's name, a profession of the religion which bears it, and an explicit dedication of one's self to the service and glory of God in him. No person of adult age has any right to be looked upon as a sober-minded or real christian, till he has given reason for others to think him such, by making a christian profession in conformity to the order of the gospel, or the commandment of our Saviour, and the laws of his kingdom. And here,

It is required, not only that you believe in Christ, but voluntarily, or by an act of your own, take upon yourselves the character of his disciples and followers,

by "naming his name" in a solemn and public manner, or "before men;" thereby visibly devoting yourselves to God in him, and laying yourselves under obligation to conduct yourselves in other respects, as becomes the professed followers of him, who was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." The Lord Jesus Christ not only encourages such a public confession of him, by a gracious promise on one hand; but discountenances the neglect thereof by a most awful threatening on the other. "Whosoever shall confess me before men," saith he, "him shall the Son of Man also confess before the angels of God. But he that denieth me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God \*." In another evangelist it is,—"before my Father which is in heaven †." He says nearly to the same purpose, elsewhere. "—Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, of him shall the

\* Luke xii. 8, 9. † Matt. chap. x.



“ Son of Man be ashamed, when he shall  
“ come in his own glory and his Father’s,  
“ and of the holy angels \*.” These are very  
solemn warnings against disowning Christ,  
his name or “ his words,” even in time of  
fore trial and persecution for righteousness  
sake; to which times they more particu-  
larly refer. But to be ashamed of, to  
disown or to neglect confessing them,  
when there is nothing of that sort to be  
feared, is doubtless far more criminal and  
dangerous. It is manifest from the whole  
current of the New Testament, that the  
faith of the heart is to be accompanied  
with the confession of the tongue; and  
that as necessary to salvation, except in  
extraordinary cases. “ If thou shalt con-  
“ fess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus,”  
says the apostle, “ and shalt believe IN  
“ THINE HEART that God hath raised  
“ him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.  
“ For with the heart man believeth unto  
“ righteousness, and with the mouth con-

“ session is made unto salvation \*.” Indeed, in any who know this to be the will and commandment of Christ respecting them that believe on him, the contempt or wilful neglect thereof, is absolutely inconsistent with a sincere regard to him and his authority: it is, in its nature, inconsistent with such a faith in him as the scripture speaks of as saving; which faith respects him as truly in his regal, as in his prophetic or sacerdotal character. But,

2. Though it is positively enjoined upon those who believe in Christ, to confess him before men; yet it is not to be supposed necessary, or the thing intended hereby, that persons should stand up in the midst of an assembly, *vivâ voce*, or in express words uttered by themselves, declare their faith in him. For some cannot even SPEAK at all, and much less in such a public manner. Neither can it be

† Rom. x. 9, 10.

supposed necessary for them to profess their repentance, faith and experiences in a long writing, under their hands;—a common practice in many churches, but growing daily more and more into disuse; and not without some reason, as being attended with divers inconveniencies, which need not be particularly mentioned. Therefore,

3. Nothing more, or farther, can be supposed necessary as to this matter, than that people should, in a solemn, public manner, and by some sign, or significant gesture, commonly understood, make such a declaration of their faith in Christ; signifying their consent to the covenant of grace established in him, and their resolution, by the help of God, to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless; or to conduct themselves in all respects according to the laws of Christ's kingdom. This may be effectually done, without any speaking or

writing on their part, in public. And as nothing beyond this can reasonably be supposed to be required, by "confessing Christ before men;" so neither can any thing short of it be supposed to come up to the thing really intended thereby, in any natural construction of the words, or in consistency with the practice of the christian church from the earliest times.

4. Under this head, I must not omit particularly to mention the christian ordinance of BAPTISM, which our Lord instituted as the outward, visible sign of initiation into his church, or a mark of discipleship to him; saying to his apostles, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth: go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost \*." The known practice of the apostles afterwards, being compared with this injunction,

10 9112800 Matt. xxviii. 19.



shows that our Lord designed WATER BAPTISM therein. For, that they actually baptized with water, is evident from many passages in the New Testament; not only in the Acts, but Epistles of the apostles: and doubtless they did so in obedience to Christ's command, which they understood much better than the modern deniers of water baptism.

I need remind you only of two passages of scripture, both in the Acts of the apostles. Soon after they themselves were baptized with the "Holy Ghost and with fire;" i. e. received the Spirit, which appeared to them in the form of "cloven tongues, like as of fire \*;" we find them preaching thus to the people: "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, AND YE SHALL RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST †." According to which, the

\* Acts ii. 3. † Ver. 38.

Holy Ghost was to be given them in consequence of their being baptized in the name of Christ. Therefore receiving christian baptism, and receiving the Holy Ghost, do not mean precisely the same thing, as it is pretended; one of them being prior to the other, and a means thereof. And what could that be, but water baptism in Christ's name, in consequence of which, the persons baptized were to receive spiritual baptism, or the Holy Ghost?

But there is another passage still more clear. We are informed that St. Paul came to Ephesus, and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism."

Be pleased particularly to observe what

immediately follows, in which there is an express reference to the words of John: "Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, That they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. AND WHEN PAUL HAD LAID HIS HANDS ON THEM, THE HOLY GHOST CAME UPON THEM \*." Now, could there possibly be a plainer distinction than this, either, first, betwixt John's baptism, and baptism in Christ's name afterwards; or, secondly, betwixt these persons being baptized in Christ's name, and their receiving the Holy Ghost? This was subsequent to the other, and not till after Paul had laid his hands on, as well as baptized them. Christian baptism then, and receiving the Holy Ghost, were not the same thing; but the former of them,

\* Acts xix. 1-6.

ordinarily at least, prior to the latter, and an instituted means thereof: and what could that be, but water baptism? Whereas upon Barclay's principles, it was John's baptism only, that was by water; Christ's being entirely spiritual.

Upon the whole then, the plain sense of John's words, on which so much stress has been laid by the Quakers, may be expressed thus \*—I indeed baptize you with water [only] unto repentance: but Jesus Christ will soon institute another baptism, which, though performed by an external washing with water, as mine is, shall yet have far more glorious effects. For penitent believers in Christ, being baptized in conformity to his institution, shall, in consequence thereof, receive the Holy Ghost.—There is nothing harsh in this paraphrase; the difference betwixt John's and Christ's baptism is sufficiently preserved thereby; and there is a necessity for

\* Mat iii. 11.



such an one, in order to account for the apostles baptizing with water, as they certainly did. Let me add, that if this be an instituted means of obtaining the Holy Spirit, it may be justly feared that those who neglect and despise it, have somewhat LESS of the SPIRIT among them, than they would be thought to have; though I do not presume to judge any; for to his own master every one standeth or falleth.

Your duty then, in this respect, is clear. All who believe in Christ, not having already been baptized with water, are obliged to be so, in obedience to his command.—Though as to the far greater part of you, my young brethren, I conclude you were baptized in your infancy: so that you are not to be exhorted to be again baptized. But there are many of you, who have not yet made this as it were your own act, by visibly taking upon yourselves the bonds of the christian cove-

nant. And the neglect hereof, in those that are come to adult age, is not very consistent with christian sobriety. Nor can you be thought to have YOURSELVES confessed Christ before men, in the manner required by him, by being devoted to him by your PARENTS or OTHERS, in your infancy.

5. There is a considerable number of those that may be justly accounted young men, though not unmarried, who, in order to obtain baptism for their children, have made a profession of their faith in Christ, and solemnly bound themselves to observe ALL the laws of his kingdom; and yet turn their backs upon the LORD'S TABLE from year to year, as if this were no christian institution;—as though Christ had never said, “This do in remembrance of me;” and as though the inspired apostle had not said, “As oft as ye eat of this bread, and drink of this cup,

“ ye do shew the Lord’s death, TILL HE  
 “ COME.” It is not very easy to reconcile  
 this neglect, with the supposition of your  
 having been SINCERE and IN EARNEST,  
 when you engaged to obey all Christ’s  
 known commandments and institutions;—  
 upon supposition that you allow this to be  
 one of them, as you cannot deny it to be.  
 I have often, and very particularly shewn  
 what your duty is in this respect; though  
 with much less success than was desired.  
 However, I will not be weary or dis-  
 couraged in reminding you of it; hoping  
 that the time will come, when what is  
 seriously said to you upon this head, will  
 be as seriously attended to; and have a pro-  
 per influence upon your practice: which  
 will be a better evidence of your being  
 truly SOBER-MINDED, than any that you  
 can well give, while you habitually ab-  
 sent yourselves from the fellowship of  
 Christ’s church and people in one of his  
 ordinances.

# SERMON V. 191

Indeed, if UNCHRISTIAN terms of christian communion are insisted on in any church or churches, your not being incorporated with them, provided it is solely for this reason, will not be your fault, but that of the imposers of such terms. Nor can it be denied, that there has been a great deal of this kind of antichristian imposition and tyranny practised in different ages; particularly in respect of CREEDS, or ARTICLES of faith. For, instead of being contented with such a plain and apostolic confession as this, "I believe that JESUS CHRIST IS THE SON OF GOD\*," or even with a general and serious profession of faith in the holy scriptures as the word of God; many churches have imperiously required an explicit profession of unscriptural articles of faith, as the pretended "form of sound words," tho' almost barbarous enough, perhaps, both in expression and sentiment, at once to wound the ear, affront the

\* Acts viii. 37.



sense, and shock the humanity of an **IN-  
TENT**! others, not suffering under it, and enjoying themselves

But, surely, it is time that all protestants, especially protestant-dissenters, should make the holy scriptures the standard of a sound faith and christian practice, in opposition to **ALL OTHER FORMS OF SOUND WORDS**; as some are pleased to miscall the reveries of poor crazy monks and lunatics, half-distracted schoolmen, superannuated enthusiasts, and proud, factious, avaritious zealots for a party, pretending to make black white, and white black; and then scolding at, and cursing all the world, that will not implicitly believe their unholy ravings, and submit to them as the true, uncorrupted **CATHOLIC FAITH**!—God, in his own time, which is approaching, will put an end to all these antichristian usurpations in his church. Christ's fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor.” And happy is it for those, who in the mean

while, neither exercise such tyranny over others, nor suffer under it; at once allowing to all, and enjoying themselves, that just and reasonable "liberty, where-  
"with Christ has made his disciples FREE  
"from every such yoke of bondage."

I might mention many other particular duties, as belonging to the head of christian sobriety; for, indeed, there is no one duty, but what belongs to it. But instead of descending to more particulars, I must observe now in the last place,

VIII. That christian sobriety implies, living a truly religious, virtuous and holy life, in conformity to the precepts of the gospel, and the laws of Christ's kingdom. Our Lord frequently cautioned his disciples against depending upon an external profession of faith and religion, without good works, without obedience to his commandments. "Not every one that  
"saith unto me, Lord, Lord, says he,

" shall enter into the kingdom of heaven ;  
 " but he that doeth the will of my Fa-  
 " ther who is in heaven. Many will say  
 " unto me in that day, Lord, Lord,  
 " have we not prophesied in thy name,  
 " and in thy name cast out devils, and  
 " in thy name, done many wonderful  
 " works ? And then will I profess unto  
 " them, I never knew you : depart from  
 " me, ye that work iniquity \*." So that,  
 whatever WONDERFUL works men may  
 do, yet if they neglect good works, or still  
 work INIQUITY, they are not true disci-  
 ples of Christ. How many DEVILS soever  
 they cast out ; yet if they leave ONE to  
 reign in their own hearts, so that they  
 " do his lusts," they are most expressly  
 excluded from all hopes of eternal life.  
 Indeed, living in the practice of any known  
 sin, is absolutely inconsistent with true  
 repentance, and that faith which is saving,  
 according to the account before given of  
 " Matt. viii. 21, 22, 23."

them. "How shall they that are dead to  
 "sin, live any longer therein?" Or how  
 shall they that are "alive unto God by  
 "Jesus Christ," not live to God, or not  
 obey his known will in every respect? It  
 is impossible: if the tree be good, the  
 fruit will be good; if the heart be renew-  
 ed and sanctified, the life will also be re-  
 newed and sanctified, the life will be  
 renewed and holy. The love of God and  
 of man, understood in their proper and  
 just extent, and considered as principles  
 in the heart, the effects of christian faith  
 through the influences of the Holy Spirit,  
 do in a sort comprehend all christian du-  
 ties and virtues. Known, wilful and ha-  
 bitual disobedience to God in any respect,  
 is inconsistent therewith; inconsistent  
 with christian sincerity, and therefore  
 with sobriety.

If therefore, you aspire to the character  
 of being sober-minded, "having believed  
 "in God, you must be careful to maintain



“ good works :” you must keep his commandments in view, endeavouring by his grace, to glorify him in all things ; to form your temper, and whole course of life, according to those reasonable, just and good precepts which Christ has left his disciples to walk by ; not forgetting his own admirable example of piety, purity and humility ; of meekness and charity, of temperance and patience ; nor allowing yourselves in any thing which you know, or in your consciences believe, is contrary to the will of God. For, as was intimated before, doing so, is absolutely inconsistent with integrity and uprightness of heart, as well as with that holiness of life which God has required of all whom he hath favoured with the light of the gospel, and called to his eternal kingdom and glory by Jesus Christ.

I have now done with the FIRST general head of discourse proposed, having somewhat distinctly explained to you the

nature of that sobriety, to which "young men" are to be exhorted,

Let me conclude for the present, with some short reflections on what has been said upon it.

And, 1. You would do well, my young brethren, to apply this to yourselves respectively, in the way of serious self-examination. It becomes you to consider both your past and present ways; what sentiments and dispositions are predominant in your hearts; and by what rules and maxims your lives are directed: that so you may be able to judge, what your own true characters respectively are; whether you are truly religious, or sober-minded. For, as has been observed more than once, true religion, and true sobriety, are not really different, but essentially one and the same thing.

It shall now be taken for granted, that you do not disbelieve the being, perfections and providence of God, or the general truth of the christian revelation; and also, that you have some just conceptions of the common frailty and degeneracy of mankind. Neither of these things shall in the least be called into question—But Have you sincerely repented of your own sins before God? Have you, in a deep sense of your guilt and unworthiness, fled for refuge from his justice to his grace and mercy, through his Son Jesus Christ, and internally consented to that method of salvation which is revealed in the gospel? Do you live in the frequent practice of sincere and fervent prayer? Have you also confessed Christ's name before men, in the manner required by him, and visibly dedicated yourselves to God in him? And do you conscientiously endeavour to walk according to all Christ's known commandments? It would be convenient for you to put such questions as these to your-

selves, as in the presence of God, who is greater than your hearts, and knoweth all things.

2. Those of you who can truly answer these questions in the affirmative, (as I hope some of you can) may assure yourselves that you are indeed sober-minded; and have great ground of comfort, peace and joy, as being the sons of God, and heirs of eternal life. I might address and congratulate you in the language of St. John, in his first epistle:—"I write unto you young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one." And again, "I have written unto you young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one." Happy you, my beloved brethren, who even in youth have, through grace, attained to that state and character, which so many other persons, though advanced in years, are yet far from! But,



3. Be not high-minded, but fear. A sober mind, is always an humble one. Boast not of your religious attainments, as the shameful and hypocritical manner of some is; and if you ever glory even in thought, let it be only in the Lord. "For what hast thou, that thou didst not receive?" Be sensible of your imperfections, and beware of relapse into any sinful courses.—"The just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.\*" There is still ample room in the breast of you, for improvement; for increase of sobriety, knowledge, strength, and all christian virtues. Endeavour therefore, to make progress in the ways of wisdom and holiness: for he that stands still, instead of pressing forward in the christian race, is on the point of going backward. And it were doubtless "better for any not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it,

\* Heb. x. 38.

to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

4. As to those of you, my young brethren, who cannot pretend to be sober-minded according to these scriptural marks and rules of sobriety, you have no reason to be satisfied with your present condition, or to think it safe. For there is no real safety in any state below that of true christianity; or in any thing short of that repentance, faith, and renewed state of mind, with which eternal life is connected by the promises of the gospel. If you should die short of this, you would die in your sins; unpardoned, uninterested in the redemption wrought out by Christ: and what the consequence of this would be, surely you need not to be now informed. But,

5. Lest I should be misunderstood, I must tell you, I do not mean hereby, that

if you are deficient in any of these respects, or fall short of such a truly christian state, you are of consequence destitute of every degree of sobriety that is of any consideration, and so are to be ranked in the same class with the most profligate and abandoned sinners. God forbid! The holy scriptures, in numberless places, suppose a measure of knowledge, conviction of sin, seriousness of mind, and desire to know the will of God and the way of life, antecedent to a saving illumination and repentance, faith and regeneration, and yet preparatory thereto; which things, being considered in this view, are truly valuable and important. And indeed, they are the effects of God's gracious influences upon the heart; in conformity to what is said of Lydia in the Acts, "That the Lord **OPENED HER HEART TO ATTEND TO** those things which were spoken by **Paul.**" Our Saviour also tells such a serious, inquisitive person, that he was **not far from the Kingdom of God."**

Nor do the holy scriptures leave us any room to doubt, but that all persons living under the gospel, who are so far convinced of their sinful state, and so desirous of obtaining eternal life, as SINCERELY and PERSEVERINGLY to seek God's face and favour, shall actually attain to a lasting knowledge of him. If any of you are in such a state of mind as this, there is just and great reason to hope, that being already near to God's spiritual kingdom, you will ere long be actually translated into, and become the happy subjects of it for ever. But, as was said before, this is not a state to be rested in. You may, without all doubt, relapse into your sinful courses after such a partial reformation: in which case, "the latter end will be worse with you than the beginning." It highly concerns you therefore, to beseech the God of all grace, both "to keep you from falling," and to "give you repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;"—the truth as



it is in Jesus; that knowing him, and the only true God in and by him, you may obtain eternal life.

6. If even such thoughtful and serious young men as were last mentioned, are not yet, however, in a state of safety, or at present entitled to glory, honour and immortality; how far, alas! are those from being so, who do not at all consider their ways, nor so much as make the important inquiry, "What they shall do to be saved?"—Those who live in the allowed gratification of their lusts; and, instead of seeking after God, if haply they may find him, rather "say to the Almighty, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways!" Alas! my young brethren, if there are any hear or read this, to whom this character justly belongs, your condition is truly deplorable. For is it not so, to be in a state of enmity against God your Creator? Against Him, in whom you live, move,

and have your being; Him from whom you can neither fly, nor effectually hide yourselves in any secret place, not even in the dens and rocks of the mountains, or though the rocks and mountains should, at your entreaty, fall on you and cover you;—and against whom you can make no resistance; Him who is at once omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient, as well as infinite in holiness and righteousness! It is dreadful indeed, to be “enemies to such a Being in your minds, by wicked works!”

But lest the very thought hereof should too much overwhelm you; lest the “spirit should fail before God, and the souls which He hath made”; let me remind you, that God is no less good and merciful, than he is holy, great and powerful. He “will not contend for ever, neither will he be always wroth:” he is even now waiting to be gracious to you;—

• Isa. lvii., 16.

to every one that will attend to the voice of love, and turn at his reproof, how numerous soever your sins have been. His mercy is at once higher than the heavens, and lower—"deeper than hell;" as it saves those who are deserving of it! The blood of Jesus, that hallowed fountain, in which so many millions of polluted souls have been cleansed and healed, has not yet lost its purifying, salutary virtue; nor will it do so, while there are any sinners on earth willing to be cleansed and saved by it; nor even after there are none! The Holy Spirit of God is, I doubt not, now striving with your hearts, and, if I may so express it, moving upon the face of the chaos\*, towards the production of the NEW CREATION in Christ, as it once did at the time of the OLD, to the perfecting thereof. O then, my young brethren, let not this be your condemnation at the great day, That you at once despised the riches of God's goodness, leading you to

\* Gen. i. 2.

repentance;—accounted the blood of the covenant wherewith you might have been sanctified, an unholy thing;—and did despite unto the Spirit of grace, by which you would otherwise have been sealed to the day of redemption!

those who are despoiled of Jesus, that hallowed fountain, in which so many millions of polluted souls have been cleansed and healed, has not yet lost its purifying, salutary virtue; nor will it do so, while there are any sinners on earth willing to be cleansed and saved by it, nor even after there are none! The Holy Spirit of God is I doubt not, now striving with your hearts, and, if I may so express it, moving upon the face of the chaos\*, towards the production of the new creation in Christ, as it once did at the time of the orb, to the perfecting thereof. O then, my young brethren, let not this be your condemnation at the great day, That you at once despoiled the riches of God's goodness, leading you to



SERMON VI.  
S E R M O N VI.

T H I N G S

CONTRARY TO  
CHRISTIAN SOBRIETY.

AS TAKING  
GOD'S NAME IN VAIN.

NEGLECTING  
PUBLIC WORSHIP.

A N D  
IRREVERENT BEHAVIOUR.

S E R M O N VI.

T H I N G S

CONTRARY TO  
CHRISTIAN SOBRIETY,

AS TAKING  
G O D's NAME IN VAIN,

NEGLECTING  
P U B L I C W O R S H I P,

A N D  
IRREVERENT BEHAVIOUR at it,

S E R M O N VI

S E R M O N VI  
TITUS II. 6.

Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded.

CONTRAST TO

**M**Y young brethren, having in the first discourse, made some remarks on the text, introductory to my main design; and having, in four others, somewhat distinctly explained to you the nature of that sobriety which is here spoken of, as also recommended it to you in a customary way: I proceed now, by giving assistance, as was proposed in the second place,

DIFFERENT BEHAVIORS &c.  
Secondly, To point out, particularly, some of the many sins, follies and criminal excesses, which are repugnant to christian sobriety; and against which

## S E R M O N VI.

### TITUS ii. 6.

*Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded.*

**M**Y young brethren, having, in the first discourse, made some remarks on the text, introductory to my main design; and having, in four others somewhat distinctly explained to you the nature of that sobriety which is here spoken of, as also recommended it to you in a cursory way: I proceed now, by divine assistance, as was proposed in the second place,

Secondly, To point out, particularly, some of the many sins, follies and criminal excesses, which are repugnant to christian sobriety; and against which



young men especially, may need to be cautioned.

This, it is conceived, may, by the blessing of God, be very serviceable to you, not merely by shewing you what you ought not, but what you ought to do; and so giving you a still more distinct idea of christian sobriety. For, to every vice that is to be avoided as contrary to this sobriety, there is an opposite virtue or duty, which ought to be practised as a branch of it: and, it is well known, that in all cases in general, contraries serve for the illustration of each other. So that when you are shewn what things you ought to avoid, you will the more clearly discern what that manner and course of life is, to which you are exhorted: nor shall I fail, as I go along, particularly to remind you of the duties and virtues, to which the sins that are to be mentioned, stand in opposition. And if some of these sins and excesses have been hinted at already in any of the preceding

# SERMON VI. 213

discourses, yet that will not render a more particular caveat with respect to them, superfluous or improper.

Let me farther premise. That though in the enumeration of these sins and follies, it is rather my intention to give you friendly warning as to the future, than to accuse, reproach and upbraid you, as to any faults which you may have been guilty of in times past; yet it will be highly proper for you to make the application to yourselves respectively, so far as you have been really guilty of any of these crimes. You ought, with shame and ingenuous sorrow, to acknowledge them to God; humbly imploring the forgiveness of them through HIM, who once appeared to put away sins by the sacrifice of himself. For he that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them, shall find mercy with the Lord; who "is not willing that ANY should perish, but

“ that ALL should come to repentance.”

—Let me begin then,

I. With the mention of an heinous sin more immediately against God; I mean that of “ taking his name in vain.” To use the name of the great and holy God irreverently or lightly in common discourse, and more especially to swear by it rashly, falsely, wantonly, or without lawful occasion; to imprecate the curse of God, either upon yourselves or others, whether in jest or in earnest; together with whatever commonly goes under the name of profane language: all these things, I say, are doubtless prohibited in that well known, and yet often violated command of the decalogue, “ Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.” And the words immediately following, clearly and strongly express the high displeasure of the Almighty against those who break this commandment, together with the certainty and greatness of their punishment,

unless it be prevented by deep repentance—"For the Lord will not hold him  
"guiltless, that taketh his name in vain."

There are many other passages of scripture in which this species of common and gross impiety, is severely prohibited and condemned.

"He that planted the ear, shall he  
"not hear?"—Particularly shall he not  
hear and punish the profane oaths and  
curses, the abominable imprecations of  
ungodly sinners! If wicked men are to  
give an account in the day of judgment,  
even of "every idle word" that they speak,  
as our Saviour positively declares they  
shall; how much rather shall they give an  
account of such impious, such abominably  
wicked words, as I am here speaking of!  
And what religious sobriety, do you think,  
can possibly be in the mind of that person,  
whether old or young, whose mouth is  
thus filled with curses, and other profane

Psal. xciv. 9.



language?—in the mind of one, who scruples not to trifle with that venerable name, at which holy angels bow with love and reverence, and devils themselves tremble, and are horribly afraid!—In the mind of one, who upon any slight discontent or uneasiness, or perhaps without any sort of provocation, calls upon the great God to damn either himself or another, or the like? Certainly, there can be no true sobriety in those persons, whoever they be, that addict themselves to these practices, saying perhaps with the wicked of old, “Our lips are our own; who is Lord over us?” The use of such language evidently discovers the want of all due reverence to the great God, and a mind depraved to a sad degree, upon any supposition that can be made. There is no tolerable excuse for it, nothing that can be said by way of apology for those that are chargeable with it, but what will much more effectually shew their great guilt and impiety. For example,

If it should be said, that they really mean NOTHING, when they lightly use the name of God, and imprecate the vengeance of heaven upon themselves, which is the most favourable supposition; yet does it not discover a total absence of reverence to God, and of all serious concern about his favour, his blessing or his curse, when people can often use his name without thinking of Him, and speak of his curse, or of damnation itself, without meaning any thing thereby! What? have the name of God frequently in their mouths, and yet not have “God himself in all their thoughts!”—Often speak of his blessing and curse, of heaven and hell; and yet not think of them, or mean any thing thereby! What a totally irreligious?—what a “reprobate,” undiscerning, blinded, and monstrously depraved mind does this imply? How near is it to right down atheism?

But it will perhaps be said, that though some persons do really think of God, or

his wrath and curse, when they speak of them; yet they are only IN JEST, when they use such language, and intend not as they say. What? jest with the holy and venerable name of the great God, and speak of his blessing and curse, of heaven and hell, for merriment and diversion! Is not this to make the matter still worse? Would it not, of the two, be less criminal to have no design at all, than such a one as this? Doubtless it would.

But you will say, perhaps, that they use such language, because it is by some reckoned FASHIONABLE and POLITE; and to avoid the imputation of being PRECISE, NOTIONAL and WHIMSICAL. Be it so. The time has indeed been, though I hope it is not the case at this day, when those who scrupled to curse and swear profanely, were stigmatized as PURITANS and FANATICS; the enemies of THE CHURCH at least, if not of the STATE! — But how does this help the matter? What? trifle

with the most sacred and awful things, profane the name of God, and break his commandments, for the sake of being thought polite and fashionable ! or for fear of being thought precise ; that is, in other words, being thought to fear God and his displeasure ! for this must be the true and only meaning of preciseness, in the present case. And what a monstrous pitch of impiety must that man be arrived at, who is ashamed and afraid of being thought to fear God and his wrath ? and who will break his known commandments, profane his holy name, and trifle with the most sacred things to convince some [supposed] polite and fashionable people, that he does not fear him !—Is not this worse and worse ? Without doubt.

What then shall next be said by way of apology for profane swearers ?—that they are in EARNEST, and really wish God would damn them or others, when they imprecate his vengeance ? It were needless



to say any thing to shew their madness and impiety upon this supposition: which are as great as any that the devils themselves are guilty of!

This practice is no less irrational, or contrary to the light of nature, than it is to the revealed will, and express law of God. And it is one of those enormous sins, against which young men need to be particularly warned. It is not indeed, a crime that is peculiar to them. Some persons that are advanced in years, are notoriously guilty of it: yea, it is said, there are CERTAIN CREATURES both old and young, appearing in female apparel (for I will not prostitute the respectable name of WOMEN, by giving it to them) who are no ordinary proficient in this kind of impiety! But whoever are, or are not addicted to it, you, my young brethren, must either wholly refrain from it, or else renounce all pretensions to sobriety, and confess that you have no love or reverence for, no fear

of God before your eyes. The most untutored savage in the woods of America, might with as much reason, and as good a grace, assume to himself the character of a refined politician, or a shrewd philosopher, as any profane swearer and blasphemer could pretend to be religious, or sober-minded. The fear of the Lord is the very "beginning of wisdom;" and if that finds any place in your hearts, you will have a sacred veneration even for his name, as well as for Him: you will never mention it, or speak or think of the great GOD, but in a sober and reverent manner. It will be as impossible for you, either in jest or earnest, either for no end at all, or to please fools and madmen, to swear lightly by the name of God, or to call upon him to damn yourselves or others, as to lay violent hands upon yourselves. And yet how common a thing is it to hear both old and young, and even children in the streets, who can hardly stammer out an oath or a curse,

using this kind of language? All of them without exception, hereby making it manifest, that they neither fear God nor regard man, however **WELL BRED** they may conceit themselves; and are destitute of the first principles, not only of grace and sobriety, but of decorum and good manners: for this practice is an affront to every reasonable and virtuous man, as well as an heinous, aggravated offence against Almighty God.

II. Another sin, against which you are to be cautioned, is, neglecting the **PUBLIC WORSHIP** of God upon the “**Lord’s day** ;” either staying at home in idleness, or unnecessarily employing yourselves in worldly affairs, when you ought to be with the people of God; joining with them in praising and praying to him, or in hearing his word read and preached, for your instruction and edification in the things pertaining to his kingdom, and to your eternal good.

You know, doubtless, that as early as the time of Moses, i. e. above three thousand years ago, God appropriated one day in seven to be observed as an holy sabbath to himself, or a day of rest from common secular business, and to be spent in religious exercises: saying, “Remember the sabbath-day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God, &c.” It seemed not improper to remind you of this ancient institution of a sabbath: though I must acknowledge, that I think Christians have no concern with THE SABBATH, most properly so called, (I mean the Mo-  
saic or Jewish sabbath) any more than they have with circumcision, the passover, and other sacrifices, &c. All these things were but “a shadow of good things to come.” And when Christ the body, the substance came;—when his church, most properly so called, in distinction from the Jewish, was established, those



things ceased: at least, the Gentile converts were under no obligation to observe any one of them; no, not even the moral law, considered merely as a part of the law of Moses. For if they had, they would have been also bound to observe all the others for the same reason. So that if Gentile Christians are obliged to any of the things which were enjoined in the law of Moses, as they doubtless are; yet they are only those, that are either of moral and eternal obligation, or else adopted, and taken into "the law of Christ," and considered as a part of his institution. The Mosaic, or SEVENTH-DAY SABBATH, is neither of these. If it were, properly speaking, of moral obligation, it would be so to all nations in all ages; universally and perpetually binding, so that the law relating thereto, could no more be either REPEALED or CHANGED, than those commandments which require us to love God and our neighbour. And there are few, if any persons, who pretend to say,

that Christ or his apostles ever enjoined Christians to observe the seventh-day sabbath instituted by Moses, making that part of the decalogue a part of the christian rule of life. Neither is there, according to the gospel of Christ, any other sabbath, or day to be observed with a Judaical rigour and severity; with which the more liberal, ingenuous and filial spirit of christianity, very little agrees. And whoever at this day, pretends to maintain the obligation to regard ANY SEVENTH DAY as a sabbath, either upon the footing of the law of nature, or that of Moses, will have a disgraceful overthrow, or a very contemptible opponent.

Upon what footing then, you will ask me, do I assert an obligation to observe “the Lord’s day,” or “the first day of the week,” in a religious manner? I answer, intirely upon a Christian basis; upon a footing quite distinct from that on which the Jewish sabbath was instituted and observed. Let me briefly explain this matter.

It is in general consonant to the light and law of nature, that God should be worshipped, &c. in a social, public manner. And if so, it is convenient and necessary, that some particular TIMES, and even PLACES, should be more especially appropriated to that use, or end. For otherwise, people would not know WHEN or WHERE to go, in order to meet with others to join with them in these offices of religion. It evidently appears also from the New Testament, to have been the will of Christ and of God, not only that social worship should be upheld under the gospel dispensation, but more particularly, that "the first day of the week," on which our Saviour arose, and was "declared to be the Son of God with power," should be RELIGIOUSLY, GRATEFULLY and JOYFULLY observed, in praise, prayer, &c. For this day is divers times mentioned in the New Testament, as the day on which Christians assembled together in a more

especial manner, in the first age, for religious purposes \*.

It must be remembered also, that the primitive Christians came together thus on the first day of the week, under the immediate eye, countenance and direction of the inspired apostles; who used to meet and pray with, teach, exhort and preach to them, thereon: at which time also the Lord's supper used to be celebrated. So we read particularly, [Acts xx. 7.] "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, &c."

This example of the first Christians, considering all circumstances, and particularly their meeting on this day, under the immediate inspection of, and with the inspired apostles, is sufficient to give that day the PREFERENCE to any other, for

\* Compare John xx. 1. Acts xx. 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 2. and Rev. i. 10.



the purposes aforesaid : especially when we consider it as the day of that grand and important event, the very basis of the christian religion, Christ's resurrection ; from whence it is called " the Lord's day." Public, social worship being a duty, and some particular time being needful to be fixed on for that end ; here are positive reasons for the first day, rather than another : and no man can pretend any particular reason against this, or object against it ; except upon the footing of the antiquated Jewish sabbath, with which we have no concern.—But this is only **EXAMPLE**, you will say, not **PRECEPT**. Now, instead of insisting upon it, as I think one might do with great reason, that this example, all circumstances being considered, ought to have the force of a command with us ; I observe,

That the words of the apostle [Heb. x. 23, 24, 25.] can be considered as nothing short of a positive precept, to the purpose

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afore said. " Let us hold fast the professi-  
 " on of our faith without wavering—  
 " And let us consider one another to pro-  
 " voke unto love, and to good works ;  
 " NOT FORSAKING THE ASSEMBLING  
 " OF OURSELVES TOGETHER, AS THE  
 " MANNER OF SOME IS ; BUT EXHORT-  
 " ING ONE ANOTHER."—Now, these  
 words ought, in all reason, to be un-  
 derstood and interpreted in conformity to  
 the known general practice of the Christi-  
 an church in that age ; which was to AS-  
 SEMBLE for the exercises of religion on  
 " the first day of the week" more espe-  
 cially, though not exclusively. So that  
 in any natural and fair construction of this  
 passage, the apostle must be considered,  
 (1.) As giving his entire approbation of  
 this general usage among Christians ; as  
 one way in which they were to " hold  
 " fast their profession," to excite one  
 another " to love, and to good works,"  
 &c. (2.) As solemnly warning Christians  
 against neglecting to meet together for the

said purposes on the first, or Lord's day—  
 “Not forsaking the assembling of our-  
 selves together.” And (3.) As blaming  
 and reprovng certain of the looser, and  
 less sincere professors of christianity, who  
 even in that age absented themselves  
 from these assemblies of the faithful—“as  
 the manner of some is.”—This is no  
 forced or laboured, but an easy and natu-  
 ral construction of the apostle's words.  
 So that this practice, so reasonable in it-  
 self, and conducive to many important  
 ends, civil and temporal, as well as reli-  
 gious and eternal, wants neither apostolic  
 example nor precept for its support; and  
 even to bind it upon the consciences of all  
 who acknowledge subjection to Jesus  
 Christ.

It being plainly the will of Christ and  
 of God, that the Lord's day should be  
 observed, as has been shewn, entirely  
 upon the plan of the gospel; it will be an  
 heinous sin in you, if you neglect the pub-

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lie worship thereon; spending that time in idleness, in unnecessary worldly labours, or in diversions, which you ought to spend in the exercises of religion with the people of God. If you do thus, you will not in any measure deserve the character of being sober-minded. Forsake not therefore, the assembling of yourselves with them on this day, as the manner of some, I might say, of many is. And yet possibly these very persons may be so strangely deluded as to think themselves christians! Let me tell you, my young brethren, that whatever wrong and superstitious notions some may entertain about a particular sabbath under the gospel; yet a due observation of the LORD'S DAY, is a most material branch of christian sobriety. The neglect of it is of pernicious consequence in many respects; as is seen in too many places, where, by this means, the people are but little better than savages. The due observance, or the neglect of the Lord's day, will probably have a very ex-



tensive influence, good or bad, upon your whole temper, and general conversation. And it is evident from long experience and observation, that those persons who are remarkably negligent of this branch of christian sobriety, are generally very defective in all others: the exceptions are very few, if any. But,

III. It is not only a common and unnecessary neglect of the public worship, that is inconsistent with christian sobriety: all LIGHT AND INDECENT BEHAVIOUR IN THE HOUSE OF GOD, when you come to worship before him, is so likewise.—Barely attending, or being present at, the public worship, however constant you may be therein, is no certain evidence of religion, or sobriety. What signifies a merely bodily presence without the heart? You are to glorify God, not only in your bodies, but also, and more especially in your spirits, which are his. For God is a spirit, and they that worship him,

“ must worship him in spirit and in truth.”  
 There is no more sobriety in coming to the place of public worship on the Lord’s day, independently of the views and designs which you have in it, than there is in going to an alehouse, tavern or opera. People may have either reasonable and good, or foolish and wicked designs in coming to the public worship; and may, accordingly, be either well or ill employed while they are at it. If they come with an intention to do honour to God, to pray to and praise him, to be instructed in the knowledge of his holy will and the way of life, with a sincere desire to walk therein; and if they accordingly give their attention to these things while they are in the house of God, there is no doubt but their intention is good and laudable; and thus far they are sober-minded. But what if it should be pride or vanity, that brings them to the place of worship—that they may shew an agreeable person and air, or a fashionable suit of cloaths?

What if it should be, the “lust of uncleanness;” — that they may indulge the roivings of loose desire in a promiscuous assembly? What if it should be downright impiety;—that they may divert themselves with the seriousness of others, and secretly make a mock at the sacred word of God, read or preached? Would persons be the more sober-minded, for coming to the place of worship with such views as these! They are all of them supposable. In the first mentioned case, it is plain, they come not to worship God, but to be worshipped themselves. In the second, they come not to pay a pure and spiritual homage to the holy One of Israel, but an impure and carnal one to VENUS and her train. In the third, it is manifestly, not to serve God, but the devil, by dishonouring Him. And what worse things than these, could a young man do at an alehouse or an opera! He might possibly be much more innocently employed at either of them, even on the Lord’s day.

Now, the best interpreter of your views in coming to the public worship, will be your external behaviour thereat; I mean the best interpreter hereof to men: for God is greater than your hearts, and knoweth all things, even your "thoughts afar off." If you should come into the house of God with a light and careless, or a vain and ostentatious air: if you should often come very unseasonably, when great part of the public worship is over; and, by your indecent noise and blustering, as if you aimed to have the eyes of the assembly turned upon you, interrupt the devotion of others; if you should make it your practice to stare idly or lasciviously about you, to laugh, or the like: if you should do thus, I say instead of coming seasonably, and in a decent manner; instead of behaving with gravity, joining with apparent devotion in prayer and praise to God, and giving a becoming attention to his word read or preached; what evidence would this be



of your sobriety? Would it not rather be a proof of the vanity, levity and impiety of your hearts, than of a sober mind?—An evidence, that you had no sense of religion, and of the important ends of public worship? So far would such a behaviour, in coming to, and while at the public worship, be from a proof of your sobriety, that it would be a clear evidence of the contrary. And, in this case, you might justly apply to yourselves with shame, those words in the Proverbs of Solomon—“I was almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly.” Which words the wise man introduces, as part of the supposed confession of a foolish young one, in the deepest anguish of soul;—one, who had “hated instruction, and his heart despised reproof; who had not obeyed the voice of his teachers, nor inclined his ear to them that instructed him:” as in the verses immediately preceding.

Chap. V. 14.

Let me therefore, my young brethren, warn you against such an unseemly, such a criminal behaviour at the public worship; lest your coming there, when considered in all its circumstances, instead of being the least evidence of the sobriety, should be a full and incontestable one of the vanity, great depravity and impiety of your minds. If you aspire to the character of being SOBER-MINDED, you are to attend the public worship constantly, unless necessarily detained from it; to come to, and behave yourselves at it, with a decent gravity. And, let me add, that you are to observe the like decorum in going from it, instead of leaving the house of God with laughter and merriment, as if you were going from a comedy, or a loose play, instead of a prayer, a sermon, and the worship of your Creator. This I the rather mention, because it is notorious that some young men, often go from the public worship in such a rude, and almost riotous manner, as is quite

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shocking, not only to people of real sobriety, but to all that have any sense of decorum. And how must that behaviour appear in the eyes of the holy God, which is so justly offensive, not only to them that truly fear him, but to all persons that have the least sense of decency or propriety of behaviour?—that which would hardly be consistent with decency, in the open streets, at any other time, yourselves being judges.

S E R M O N VII.

MORE

T H I N G S

REPUGNANT TO

CHRISTIAN SOBRIETY,

AS

RIOTOUS MIRTH,

SINFUL

D I V E R S I O N S,

EXCESSIVE

EXPENCE and PRIDE in APPAREL,

AND

I D L E N E S S.



DISCOURSE VII.

TITUS II.

Young men likewise expect to be sober-minded  
In the preceding discourse, I began  
to point out to you, some of the ma-  
ny sins and follies, which are repugnant  
to christian sobriety, and against which  
young men especially do need to be cau-

You remember I mentioned,

I. That heinous sin of rash swearing  
and taking the holy name of God in

II. The neglecting the public worship  
of God upon the Lord's day. And

## S E R M O N VII.

TITUS ii. 6.

*Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded.*

**I**N the preceding discourse, I began to point out to you, some of the many sins and follies, which are repugnant to christian sobriety, and against which young men especially do need to be cautioned,

You remember I mentioned,

I. That heinous sin of rash swearing, and taking the holy name of God in vain.

II. The neglecting the public worship of God upon the Lord's day. And,

III. All light and indecent behaviour in the house of God, when you come to worship before him,

I now proceed,

IV. To caution you against EXCESSIVE, EXTRAVAGANT and RIOTOUS MIRTH in general. For it is certain that there is such a thing as THIS, which both proceeds from, and tends to evil; and is censured as criminal in the word of God. Christian sobriety stands in opposition to all such foolish and outrageous mirth. Not that chearfulness and laughing are, in all cases, inconsistent with true sobriety, far from it. Solomon observes that there is "a time to laugh," as well as "a time to weep;" which he would not certainly have said, if laughing and chearfulness had been criminal. For there is no "time for" LYING, for PROFANE SWEARING, or for any thing that is immoral in its nature. It is far from being a duty for any,

and particularly for young men, to appear always with a grave face, a gloomy, sorrowful or dejected countenance. I have a very contemptuous opinion of this FACE RELIGION; though it seems to be almost the only religion of some people. We know how much of it the Scribes and Pharisees had of old; and our Saviour speaks of it as one instance of their hypocrisy, that they "disfigured their faces;" or affected to make a grave and devout appearance, while their hearts were full of pride, covetousness and malice. The jesuits, and other religious orders of the church of Rome at this day, are also abundantly stocked with this sort of religion: and yet we have no reason to entertain a very high opinion of their piety, or the sanctity of their manners. And, in whomsoever an uniform gravity of countenance is affected, it is a much surer mark of cunning, knavish designs, and imposture, or at best of folly, than it is of religion or wisdom. It is doing violence to nature,



without any good end: for man has been defined "a risible animal," with as much justness and precision, perhaps, as "a reasonable one." And I cannot but think it very comely and agreeable, as it is far most natural for people, especially the young, to be gay and chearful; provided only, that it is not at unseasonable times, or beyond the bounds of a decent moderation. Yea, it answers very valuable ends with relation to bodily health, and in divers other respects.

But yet, my young brethren, as was said before, there is certainly such a thing as unseasonable, extravagant and sinful mirth. For you cannot suppose that the wise man had no meaning, when he censured himself for indulging to mirth in the following words: "I said in mine heart, 'Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure: and behold, this also is vanity. I said of laughter it is mad, and of mirth, what

“doeth it\*? And again:—“The heart  
 “of fools is in the house of mirth. It is  
 “better to hear the rebuke of the wise  
 “man, than for a man to hear the song of  
 “fools. For as the crackling of thorns  
 “under a pot, so is the laughter of the  
 “fool: this also is vanity†.” In con-  
 formity hereto, a greater and wiser than  
 Solomon has said, “Wo unto you that  
 “laugh now; for ye shall weep and la-  
 “ment‡.” It would doubtless be trifling,  
 to prescribe particular times and limits, or  
 to give FORMAL RULES for mirth and  
 laughter; and, in a sermon, this might  
 perhaps, provoke them both very unsea-  
 sonably. It is, however, certain in ge-  
 neral, that this natural, comely and use-  
 ful passion, ought to be under the restraint  
 of reason, as well as the other passions;  
 and, that sobriety of mind implies such  
 restraint. I know of no better general  
 direction relative to this matter, than

\* Eccles. ii. 1, 2.

† Ch. vii. 4, 5, 6.

‡ Luke vi. 25.

this:—to remember that you are “reason-  
 “able,” as well as “risible creatures;”  
 and to have an habitual sense of God’s  
 presence with you at all times, and of  
 moral, religious obligations. This may  
 be a sufficient, and perhaps the best guide  
 and security, against all unbecoming levity  
 of mind, all unseasonable and excessive  
 mirth.

Let me, however, just remind you of  
 one negative rule relating to this matter,  
 which is implied in the general one above.  
 And that is, that you are never to indulge  
 your own mirth, or to provoke that of  
 others, by singing profane, loose, im-  
 moral or obscene songs; nor even will-  
 ingly to hear them. For even “the re-  
 buke of the wife, is better than the  
 “song of fools.” And, “Is any merry,”  
 says the apostle, “let him sing psalms.”  
 It would, indeed, be a piece of weakness  
 and superstition to suppose, that this which  
 St. James recommends, is the ONLY way

in which mirth and joy can be innocently indulged. But yet it gives me a fair opportunity to recommend to you the learning of psalmody, that agreeable and useful art: which might not only be the means of our carrying on this part of public worship in the most decent and edifying manner; but prove a delightful entertainment to you in private, and a means to prevent your spending some of your hours in such mirth, as can hardly be accounted innocent.—The transition from hence to diversions and amusements, of which the young of both sexes are so fond, will not be unnatural. Wherefore,

V. If you would deserve the character of being sober-minded, you are to refrain from all SINFUL DIVERSIONS, or RECREATIONS. For christian sobriety doubtless stands in opposition to every thing that PROPERLY falls under this head.



But, lest you should think me unreasonably austere, I will plainly own to you, what is indeed implied in the manner of expression just now used,—“sinful diversions,”—that every thing is NOT sinful, which goes under the name of DIVERSIONS. Neither reason, nor the law of God, absolutely forbids every thing of this sort. Nay, I will go further: the present frail, and imperfect condition of human nature, which will not, cannot submit to an uninterrupted application to labour, or to grave, serious and weighty matters, seems to require some relief, some relaxations of this kind. And certainly, if they are lawful or innocent in any persons, they are so in the young, who need them most. I am therefore far from thinking a young man ought to be superciliously condemned for being sometimes at a concert of music, or a dance. It may be added, that persons of a studious, recluse, or any sedentary way of life, almost universally need, once in a while,

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But, lest you should think me unreason-  
to take some sort of bodily exercise, not  
merely as a relaxation to the mind, but  
for health. For, in this sense, "bodily  
exercise profiteth" much, how little so-  
ever it may profit in any other. If people  
can, at the same time, promote this va-  
luable end, and innocently amuse, relax  
and unbend their minds, so as to return  
with new spirits and vigour to their stated  
business, there is neither law, gospel nor  
reason against it. And it is a maxim, that  
those exercises of the body, with which  
the mind is in some measure gratified,  
usually contribute most to the recovery  
and preservation of health. In which  
view, riding, dancing, hunting, fishing,  
and divers other manly exercises, accord-  
ing to peoples different tastes, have been  
often recommended by the ablest physi-  
cians, and found salutary by the experience  
of many persons.

The author hopes that the concessions which he  
has made above, relative to diversions, will not be  
offensive to any persons, and judicious Christians, who  
duly considers the present state of human nature;

Having made these concessions, at once as large as you can reasonably desire, and no larger than ought to be made by those,

especially after reading the restrictions in the following paragraphs. If one were to ask, Whether it was criminal for boys of 6, 8 or 10 years old, to whip a TOP, to play MARBLES, or the like? Whether it would answer any valuable ends to keep them wholly from these pastimes, and oblige them to apply themselves constantly to their books? Or whether it is supposeable, that prophets and apostles should be commissioned to prohibit these sports of children?—Every one would, probably, answer in the negative; and confess that this would be the readiest way to make children dunces instead of scholars, by giving them a distaste to their learning, and breaking their spirits, if it did not ruin their health also. The case is, in a degree, the same, not only with young men and women, but even with those who are more advanced in years, unless they are of a very saturnine, heavy, melancholy or superstitious make. Even the old, generally need some kind of relaxations. But, to keep the young wholly from diversions under religious pretences, is quite irrational: and the direct course to make them IRRELIGIOUS, by giving them a distaste to all religion, as a sour, gloomy and morose thing. And some well meaning men have probably much disserved the interest of religion, by their too great rigour and severity in this respect.

It may be farther observed as to DANCING in particular (though the author himself had never any taste for it) That the wisest and best heathen moralists recommended it, not only as an healthy, but a kind

who will neither "speak wickedly for  
 God," nor be wiser than his word. You  
 must now allow me, on the other hand,

of sacred and religious exercise. But it is counte-  
 nanced by a far greater authority than theirs;—that  
 of the holy scriptures. The royal psalmist calls  
 upon "the children of Zion to praise the Lord's  
 name in the dance—with the timbrel and harp."

[Ps. cxlix. 2, 3. and cl. 4.] And Solomon says,  
 There is "a time to dance." [Eccl. iii. 4.] How  
 then did christians come to have a more gloomy, au-  
 sterer religion than Jews! Did they learn it from Christ's  
 being at "Cana of Galilee?"—or from his inspired  
 apostles? Neither. And the zeal of some christians  
 against dancing in general, is the more remarkable,  
 because this is one of the joyous images, under  
 which the Spirit of prophecy has represented the  
 glory and happiness of the MESSIAH'S kingdom;  
 and even this MIXT DANCING. [Jer. xxxi. 13.]

"Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance,  
 both young men and old together. For I will  
 turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort  
 them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow."

[See Luke xv. 25.]—How much wiser are some of  
 our modern sages and reformers, than either DAVID  
 or SOLOMON, or—! Superstition, though appearing  
 under the larve and disguise of religion, is in fact  
 one of its worst enemies, by making it appear sour  
 and unamiable. And we very frequently see, both  
 how much occasion there was for certain admoni-  
 tions, and how little some regard them—"Be not  
 righteous overmuch."—[Eccl. viii. 16.]—"Eve-  
 ry word of God is pure—Add thou not unto his  
 words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a  
 liar." [Prov. xxx. 5, 6.]



solemnly to warn you against what is really criminal, relative to the point in hand, and therefore inconsistent with christian sobriety.

In the first place, then, there are some diversions which are criminal in their very NATURE; and of the most pernicious tendency. Such, I think, ought to be accounted all sorts of GAMING for money, or other things of considerable value. Gaming is not a lawful and honest way, either of getting gain, or of losing one's substance. This is, in too many respects, to be now mentioned, a practice fruitful of evil; and therefore to be shunned by all christians as one of the greatest vices. Laying wagers is nearly, if not altogether as criminal. Neither is any kind of diversion to be thought innocent, in which cruelty is exercised towards the animal creation for no other end than to afford a savage entertainment to the authors, or the spectators of it. Amphitheatrical

shows and entertainments, even when no gladiators appeared to fight, either with one another, or with wild beasts \*, but only beasts with beasts, were therefore condemned with great reason by Christians, from the earliest time. These, and some other diversions that might be mentioned, are doubtless sinful in their nature; of a very bad moral tendency, and contrary even to humanity, as well as to the genius of the gospel. To these I may particularly add, the frequenting loose, immoral and profane plays; such as the greater part of those, perhaps, are, which have been acted upon the stage, even in christian countries. There are doubtless some which deserve a different character;

Some have supposed that the apostle Paul, where he speaks of his having, "after the manner of men, FOUGHT WITH BEASTS at Ephesus," 1 Cor. xv. 32. refers to his having been exposed to them by his persecutors in an amphitheatre, as the heathen used to expose their slaves and captives, for diversion; but was miraculously delivered. He speaks also, 2 Tim. iv. 17. of his having been delivered "out of the mouth of the lion." But this lion and those beasts were probably only HUMAN ones.

and which might be heard, or seen, not only innocently, but profitably, in any country where the laws did not forbid it. But wherever, almost, plays and theatrical entertainments are publicly allowed, the abuse is so gross, and the effects so pernicious in many respects, that I am persuaded the allowance of them occasions much evil, and very little, if any good. Moreover:

As to all such diversions and recreations as may be justly accounted innocent in their nature; it is to be remembered, as was hinted before, that even these may become criminal by the ABUSE, in divers ways. The following restrictions, cautions and regulations may be helpful to you in avoiding such abuses, and criminal excesses.

The first is, that the COMPANY with which you frequent these entertainments, consists in general at least, of persons of

a decent deportment; such as avoid every thing in speech and behaviour on these occasions, which is justly offensive to piety and virtue. For otherwise you cannot safely, or even innocently, associate yourselves with them, without some more urgent call than that of amusement. Tho' you should be innocent yourselves, you will be in great danger of contracting defilement and guilt, by frequenting vicious company——“Evil communication,” says the apostle, “corrupts good manners.” and Solomon; “He that walketh with wise men, shall be wise; but a COMPANION OF FOOLS shall be destroyed.”

Another necessary restriction is, that you do not frequent these diversions TOO OFTEN, or spend too great a proportion of your time in them. You are not to let them interfere, either with the duties of religion, or with the weighty and necessary business of common life. However



innocent any amusement may be in itself; yet you are to remember, it is but an AMUSEMENT; and therefore ought to give way to BUSINESS, unless when your application to THIS, has already been so intense or long, that nature requires relief. To have the heart and affections

strongly attached to amusement or diversion. Again: You ought not to attend diversions at UNREASONABLE hours, so as to be absent from home late at night, to the interruption of that good religious order, which ought to be kept up in Christian families; nor so as to indispose you for business the following day. The principal end of recreations, according to the proper signification of the word, is to RENEW, to REVIVE, to REFRESH one after fatigue either of body or mind; and thereby to prepare for a renewed application to business. It is therefore a great abuse thereof, when they disqualify for business, instead of being a preparation for it. It is in opposition to those things that are above

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Let me add another caution: You should not suffer the LOVE of any diversions to REIGN, to be PREDOMINANT in your hearts; or to engross your thoughts and affections, to the exclusion of those things that are truly noble and important in their nature. To have the heart and affections strongly attached to amusement or diversions, so as to think chiefly of them, and to be impatient for their return, is a mark of great levity, and a frivolous turn of mind, even though one should not transgress any of the foregoing rules by reason hereof; which yet is hardly a supposable case. Nor is this merely a weakness, but a sin: for it implies an absence of the grand concerns of life and godliness from the thoughts, and shews the heart to be immoderately set upon mere trifles. If you ought to take heed, as certainly you ought, that your affections are not immoderately set even upon the lawful business, gains and occupations of this life, in opposition to those things that are above

the high concerns of religion and eternity, much more ought you to take heed, that they are not thus set upon mere diversions and pastimes; the occasion for which, you are to remember, arises from the IMPERFECTION of human nature, sometimes calling for them as a little relaxation from grave and momentous affairs. Nor should you forget, even in your recreations, that you are in the presence of the omniscient and holy God. Neither should you allow yourselves in any kinds or degrees of them, which render the thought of SUCH A PRESENCE uneasy and terrifying to you: for, to you, at least, those which do so, are sinful. That which you cannot do, considering yourselves as in God's presence, without fearing his displeasure for it, is certainly criminal in you, whatever it might be in other persons.

If you would be sober-minded, my young brethren, you are to observe these,

or the like restrictions and regulations respecting your diversions: and I should have particularly subjoined one more, relative to them, had it not fallen naturally under, what seems to be of consequence enough to make a distinct head of discourse, as follows, viz.

VI. Pride, and EXTRAVAGANT EXPENCE in APPAREL, or the external adorning of your persons. This is an heinous sin, very frequently, and most solemnly censured in the word of God. It is a sin against which, not only young women, but young men, are to be particularly warned, as inconsistent with christian sobriety.—It were well if some even of the AGED of both sexes, did not need the like caution.—It is, indeed, far from being a virtue in any, particularly in young men, to appear in rags, in an uncleanly or slovenly dress, if it is in their power to appear otherwise, in clean and becoming apparel, especially in public.



And if this is not in their power, it is a necessity to be pitied, not a virtue to be commended. It may be added, that not only the custom of all civilized nations in all ages, but the holy scriptures themselves, warrant some distinction of dress in persons, answerable to the difference in their stations and circumstances in life. There seems to be a propriety in this; and some valuable ends are doubtless answered hereby, considering the state and temper of mankind, and our connexions in civil society.

But it is the great unhappiness and sin of many young people, that their hearts are set on gay and costly apparel, as if this were a matter of mighty consequence. And many of them, instead of being content with such cloathing as is suitable to their degree and circumstances, to their own or their parents worldly estate, aspire after what is far beyond either; often to the great prejudice of their too

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indulgent parents, and to their own real interest: I might add, to the hurt of their credit also. For their reputation suffers hereby in the opinion of all wise and discrete persons, who are acquainted with them and their circumstances. And yet, when they have thus exposed themselves by the gaudy and costliness of their cloathing, wholly disproportionate to their rank and circumstances; they are often still farther unhappy, and the more worthy of derision, by being proud of it; making a sort of merit of their folly and vanity; and treating with contempt, their equals, perhaps their superiors, whose apparel is more modest and decent. By this means those good ends which might otherwise be answered in society, by the distinctions of dress, are in a great measure defeated; for this confounds all ranks, destroys due subordination, and even inverts the natural order of things, by setting poor people of low degree above the rich, and those that are

of high, i. e. so far as mere pride, and sumptuous cloathing, can do it. And besides; how many people have, chiefly by this very means, been reduced to want, and beggary?—A very congruous punishment, which the wise Author of nature, and of order has ordained for those, who so vainly and wickedly attempt to confound and invert them! All who know any thing of the world, know that this is a just representation of facts; not at all heightened or exaggerated. I do not mean, that all young men are justly chargeable with this sin and folly; but that it is a very common one amongst us. And all who know any thing of the holy scriptures, know that extravagant expence, and pride in the article of dress, are often forbidden, and severely condemned in those sacred oracles. Yea, the light of nature, or common sense, easily discerns these to be egregious follies and vices.

I must therefore warn you against these things my young brethren, as quite in-

consistent with gravity and christian sobriety. They are not to be countenanced even in the OTHER SEX; for the peculiar cast of whose minds, some may possibly think, a little allowance should be made: much less ought they to be countenanced in OURS, whose thoughts and cares ought certainly, to be employed about matters of far greater importance, than the beauty or richness of our apparel, and making a gay external appearance, to catch the eyes of idle, empty flatterers; and to disgust those of the knowing observer. In a word, sobriety and foppery are incompatible with each other.

All the young would do well to remember the fatal GARDEN and the FIG-LEAVES; the sad occasion, upon which the use of cloathing was first introduced into this apostate world. Innocence would have wanted no covering for shame and dishonour. If you consider this you will not pride yourselves in any kind of



apparel, however gay or sumptuous, unless you are of such a frivolous and depraved turn of mind, as to glory in your shame. — For your cloathing, as it is the consequence, is also a natural memento, of your first parents fall, guilt and dishonour; and in some sense, of your own fall. *and miserable and poor and naked. I counsel thee to buy of me.* If you are in any degree sober-minded, there is another kind of cloathing, which will so far engross your thoughts and cares, as to leave but little room for any about the quality of your external dress. I mean that, of which Job says, *I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem.* The same, of which our Saviour speaks under the name of *a wedding garment;* for the want of which, so many persons, and some of those of the highest rank, even those that are in kings courts, and of royal dignity, will hereafter be excluded from the marriage supper of the Lamb.

though at present "cloathed in soft fair  
 "meekness." That which our Saviour again  
 speaks of in his message from heaven to  
 the church of Laodicea, saying:—"Thou  
 sayest, I am rich, and increased in  
 goods, and have need of nothing, and  
 knowest not that thou art wretched,  
 " and miserable, and poor, and blind,  
 " and NAKED. I counsel thee to buy of  
 me gold tried in the fire—and white  
 raiment, that the shame of thy naked-  
 ness do not appear."—That with which  
 the spouse of Christ, his true church, is  
 adorned: of whom it is said, that "to  
 her was granted that she should be array-  
 ed in fine linen, clean and white; for  
 the finelinen is the righteousness of the  
 saints."—And, "Blessed is he that  
 watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest  
 he walk naked, and men see his shame."—  
 some of those of the highest rank, even  
 to stand these metaphors and similitudes  
 the sacred writers, and our Lord himself,  
 "represents that faith and submission piety

that virtue, holiness and good works which the gospel enjoins upon its professors; and all which are comprehended in being sober-minded. To be clothed with these, to be adorned with this righteousness, is to have the righteousness of Christ, "the righteousness of God by faith." This is a garment which, unchanged, will serve for all seasons of the year, and for every climate. It will neither be worn out nor impaired in beauty, by use and time; but become the firmer, the more splendid and beautiful. It will endure all weathers, winds, rains and storms, without fading; even eternity will but increase its lustre. And though, perhaps, it may not entitle you to what is called GOOP COMPANY,—the company of the great, little, rich, poor men of this world; yet you need not esteem it less on that account; for it will be the means of your gaining admission hereafter into the kingdom of heaven; into the fellowship of just men made perfect; of the noble

army of martyrs; of the innumerable company of angels; of Jesus the mediator of the new covenant; and of God the judge of all; whose face you shall behold in righteousness! To desire to be clothed with such a robe as this, and to wear such a diadem, is a truly great and reasonable ambition. And when you are possessed of it, yea, whenever you sincerely desire it, one of your least concerns will be, what you shall put on, or where withal you shall be clothed, in any other respect.

VII. Another sin, against which you are to be particularly warned, is HURRI-NESS, the neglect of BUSINESS, or MIS-SPENCE of TIME; all which come nearly to the same thing. Time is indeed precious, if eternity itself is of any importance! It ought to be spent in such a manner, as will turn to good account; that is, in a reasonable, pious and virtuous manner: and none of it ought to be spent



otherwise, or thrown away. I do not mean, that people are obliged to be idle ways either at their devotions, or their labours, the BUSINESS of life. Sometime is requisite for taking food, for rest, sleep, conversation, and even for recreation and amusement, considering the present imperfect state of human nature, as has before been observed. And the time so spent, under proper restrictions, is far from being thrown away or lost: it is spent according to nature, reason and religion. But the article of sleep being excepted, which alone requires more than a quarter part of our time in general, a small proportion of it may well suffice for all the others together, for people that are in health, except perhaps for children. And whatever time is spent in any of these ways, beyond a reasonable, due proportion, be that what it will, is at the best thrown away and lost; perhaps much worse. It is morally impossible for any person to neglect the proper duties of life, or to

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live long in idleness, without falling into  
 fish practices as are positively criminal:  
 for the idle person is not only peculiarly  
 exposed to the snares and seductions of the  
 wicked one; but does, as it were,  
 tempt the devil to tempt HIM.

And considering at once, what real  
 calls there are for labour on one hand,  
 the general aversion to it on the other,  
 and the pernicious consequences of idlen-  
 ness, both with respect to civil life and  
 religion: considering these things, I say,  
 it is not without the highest reason, that  
 the holy scriptures abound with strict pro-  
 hibitions of idleness, and many positive  
 injunctions of diligence. The fatal con-  
 sequences of sloth, both with regard to  
 the present and future life, are also re-  
 presented in the strongest colours, in the  
 sacred oracles. Yea, the experience of  
 all ages, has afforded sensible demonstra-  
 tion of the ill effects of this vice. A la-  
 zy, slothful course of life, is not only

absolutely inconsistent with christian society, as being itself sinful in an high degree, but it naturally, and almost necessarily, leads to many other vices, as was intimated before. There are very few persons, if any, that can live a considerable time together in a state of INACTIVITY, as serpents, bears, and some other animals are said to do in their holes and dens, for many months of the year in cold climates. A man, particularly a young man in the spring, the warmth and highest vigour of life, will ordinarily be **DOING SOMETHING**, either innocent and good, or bad and criminal; except when he is asleep. And he that neither serveth God, nor his generation according to the will of God, in some honest and laudable way, will of course serve the devil and his lusts, and be much less a blessing than a curse to the world, and himself.

How many young men have some of us known, the sad examples of this truth!—

Young men whose ruin, to all human appearance, both as to this world and the next, took its rise from idleness, and the disuse of any lawful calling: sometimes through the criminal and cruel neglect of their parents to put them in any way of business, and to excite them to diligence therein; and often through their own native love of idleness and pleasures, and their aversion to any kind of steady application to business. Would to God, I could myself call to mind no very striking and melancholy instances of this sort! And if you, my young brethren, know of any such, it will be your wisdom to take warning by them.

But when an idle life is spoken of as repugnant to a sober one, and industrious an important branch of that sobriety which young men ought to practise, it is not meant hereby, that they are all obliged to what is commonly called hard labour; or to employ themselves in mechanical arts —



(or husbandry) in merchandize or navigation. Now there are many ingenious, laudable arts and employments, tending to the ornament and use of human life, which come under neither of these heads.

A just and necessary war, also, furnishes employment for many; and it is truly an honourable employment to fight for the defense of one's king and country, for laws and liberty, whether in the field or upon the mighty waters. There are also

many civil offices, in the exercise of, or at least in the preparation for which, young men may be worthily engaged.

There are also those three, which are commonly called the learned professions, in the exercise of which, or in acquiring the needful qualifications for them, young men may be laudably employed. Now All of these referred to, are lawful employments, and all that are so, though not equally honourable, may yet be accounted

\* Law, Physic and Divinity are the three

† N. B. All under 25 or 26 years are considered "young men," in these discourses.

In some measure, and, of consequence,  
 those persons who faithfully and worthily  
 discharge them, are worthy of honour in  
 their respective stations: in conformity to  
 the apostolic injunction, **HONOUR ALL**  
**“HUMAN”** his new vision was also necessary war  
employment for many; and it is truly an  
 Besides, there are some persons, whom  
 God has blessed at once with riches, and  
 with large, sagacious and contemplative  
 minds; who may both very worthily as to  
 themselves, and usefully to the world,  
 devote the greater part of their time to  
 making observations on, and discoveries  
 in, the word and works of God, and com-  
 municating their discoveries to mankind,  
 and so applying themselves to many  
 other business. For such men as these,  
 the world has been, and is greatly in debt-  
 ed; and the glory of God, at the same  
 time, is eminently promoted by them.  
 What more honourable or useful employ-  
 ment can there well be, than this?

I. As I have said, all under 20 or 25 years are considered  
 “young men” in these districts.

Now, all that is intended, when the great sin of idleness, and the necessity of a virtuous diligence are insisted on, is, that young men are indispensably bound to be diligent in some one or more of these honest and laudable ways; having something habitually in view, which they consider, and to which they give their attention, as a business; and in which they accordingly employ the greater part of their time. Without this, I think no young man can well deserve the character of being sober-minded: since, if he lives an idle life, in opposition hereto, he is in such a course of life as is unreasonable in itself; such an one as the holy scriptures have most expressly and repeatedly forbidden; such an one as exposes him to many great and peculiar temptations; such an one as it is almost impossible to continue long in, without falling into some of those practices, which are still more apparently immoral and wicked; such an one as will probably be pernicious

to those about him, ruinous to himself in  
this world, and terminate in his destruction  
in the other.

In a word then, my young brethren,  
take heed how you employ your time.  
It is at once fleeting, precarious, precious;  
and even of infinite importance to you, if  
that ETERNITY is so, which depends upon  
the use you make of it!

of their time. Without this, I think no  
young man can well deserve the character  
of being sober-minded: since, if he lives  
an idle life, in opposition hereto, he is  
in fact **THE FIRST VOLUME**  
in itself; such an one as the holy scrip-  
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forbidden; such an one as exposes him to  
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